

# ESCAPE

NUMBER 10



## EAT YOUR HEART OUT AT JOE'S BAR

20-PAGE NEW YORK DRAMA

By Muñoz And Sampayo!

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The Last Adventure

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The Final Programme?

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# BUT IS IT ART?

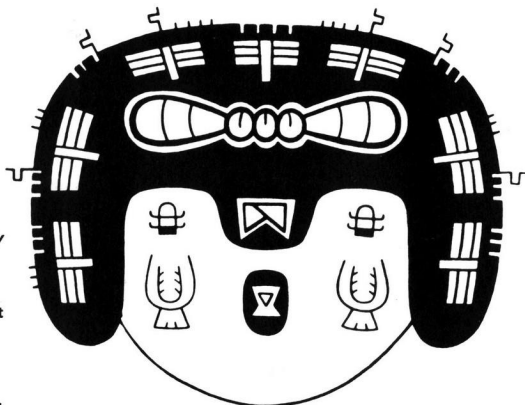
Right, detail from *Nan City Daily* by Karl Wirsum of *The Hairys* (1981). And below, Ernie Bushmiller's bright-eyed and chirpy *NANCY*, the character that inspired him.

Comics historian Bill Blackbeard has described *Nancy* as 'infuriatingly naïve', but it was enormously popular; 'attempts by exasperated feature editors to dump her... strip were met with outraged public cries... What was it in Nancy that brainy people hated and the broad middle-aged public loved?'

An exhibition of Fine Art's appropriation of comics, *Comic Iconoclasm*, begins on June 18th at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, The Mall, London until September 12th.

Don't miss the ICA's Escape Lecture with Glenn Dakin, Myra Hancock, Savage Pencil and Ed Pinsent on July 30th 1987 and the COMIC ICONOCLASM

SUPPLEMENT an essential extra free with the next issue!



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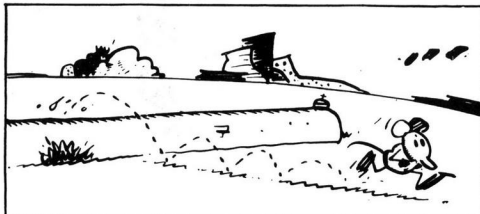
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# POPULAR GRAPHICS

EDITED BY LOUISE TUCKER



## TINTIN'S LAST ADVENTURE

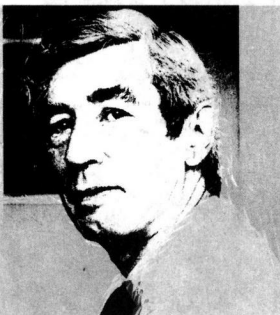
IN 1976 AFTER the twenty-third Tintin adventure *Tintin and the Picaros* was published, Hergé was asked if he had any ideas for his next book. He said he had no definite story-line but was thinking about several locations, one of them being the art world. Hergé was no stranger to this setting, as he was a 'great art lover, particularly of abstract paintings, and his collection included works by Lichtenstein, Stella, Hockney and Warhol.

But it wasn't until August, 1978, that Hergé finally decided on the setting and started work on his plucky reporter's new adventure, roughing it out in sketch form. By December 1982 he admitted that he really didn't know where the story was going. Before he could resolve it, he was taken seriously ill, hospitalised and on March 3rd 1983 he died.

Since then many Tintin-ophiles have dreamed of this unfinished 42-page draft being completed, inked, coloured and lettered by the Hergé Studios, so that it could be published as a colour 62-page album like all the others. Hergé's major assistant, Bob de Moor, favoured this idea too.



Captain Haddock, the morning after, dreams he is awakened by Bianca Castafiore, transformed into a vengeful woodpecker.



One of four pop art portraits of Hergé by Andy Warhol, who said, 'Hergé influenced my work as much as Disney.'

But the publishers Casterman preferred another solution. Besides, Hergé had said several times that there should be no more new stories of Tintin after his death.

The solution? An exact replica of Hergé's roughed out pages, reproduced same size in a sketch pad directly from the original pencil, ball-point and felt-tip, with his dialogues and directions in a parallel libretto alongside. So great is Hergé's popularity in France that all 80,000 copies of this luxurious £25 tome sold out in only two weeks and Casterman were pleased to reprint. Michael Turner, Tintin's English co-translator with Leslie Lonsdale-Cooper, considers the book 'an astonishing piece of work. As you read it, you supply your own colour so that it's almost as good as a pukka Tintin album!' It's also the first time that people have had the chance to see Hergé's inventive mind at work, literally creating on the paper in front of you.

And the story? To dodge the passionate Bianca Castafiore, Captain Haddock

ducks into an art gallery, where the pretentious conceptual 'Alpha Art' of Jamaican artist Ramo Nash is on show. But the gallery turns out to be the cover for an international gang of art forgers, whom Tintin, Snowy and Haddock trace to an island villa off Naples. There Tintin comes across a workshop filled with Nash's fake Modiglianis, Légers, Renoirs, Picassos. But then he is captured by the gang and condemned to being covered in liquid polyester and made into a sculpture. The gang leader chuckles, 'Your body will be exhibited in a museum. And no one will ever suspect that this sculpture, with the title "Reporter", is the last resting place of little Tintin!' The story then cuts off with terrible finality: it's an ironic cliffhanger as this really is Tintin's final exit stage right. How will he escape? We will never know, but Snowy is taking a message to Captain Haddock. And how would Hergé have ended it? The only clues in his papers suggest strongly that that villainous Rastapopulous was behind the deceit.

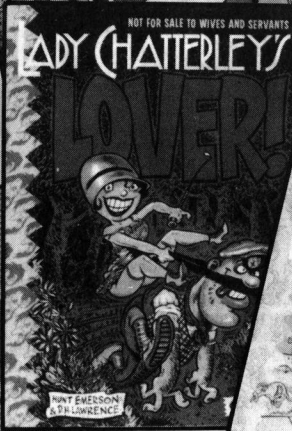
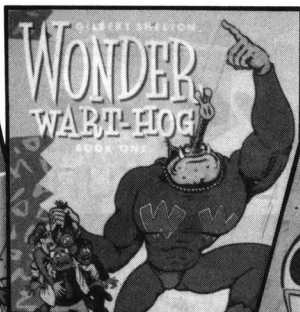
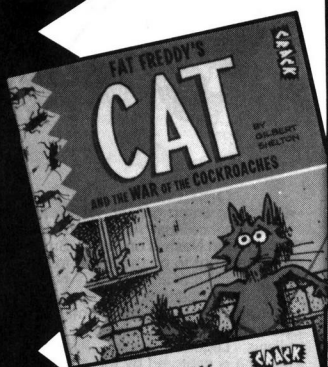
Methuen, the British publisher, plan an English language edition of *L'Alpha Art* in a single book format next year. But for those of you who can't wait, copies of the French edition may still be found at Pilot (34 Floral Street, London WC2) along with a range of T-shirts, postcards and other Tintin-abilia and in other specialist shops and you can look forward to two more English translations of Hergé's Jo, Zette and Jocko series, *Mr. Pump's Legacy* and *Destination New York*, out this autumn.





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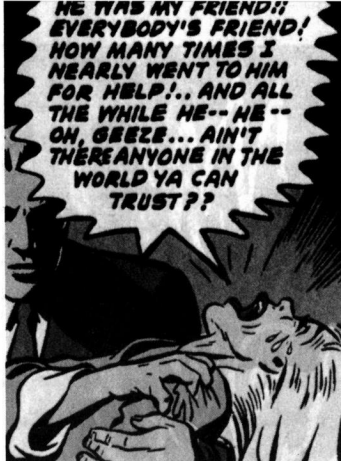


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## IN THE LIMELIGHT

TALES FROM THE CRYPT. In a de-consecrated church on Shaftesbury Avenue lies *Limelight*, the seedy London nightclub. Last March 24th they hosted an evening exhibition in their downstairs bar of gigantic 'Bigger Than Life' painted cartoons by Escape Artists, favourites and newcomers—John Bagnall, Tim Budden, Glenn Dakin, Phil Elliott, Myra Hancock, Chris Long, Bob Lynch, Savage Pencil, Ed Pinsent, Chris Reynolds, Peter Stanbury, John Watson and Steve Way. Meanwhile upstairs blow-ups of Shaky Kane's *NME* cartoons looked down gargoyle-like onto the dance-floor and later band *GIANT* played live. It was a bumpy night, with guest celebs like Kathy Acker, Martin Ware of Heaven 17 and Boy George. You can see Escape's oversized hang-ups again at this year's UK Comic Art Convention, September 5th and 6th 1987.



## COLE MINING

'YOU CAN CALL ME A TRAMP—a bum! But I'm gettin' this off my chest and you're gonna listen, see?' Sucking dry her cigarette, a wasted Mary Kennedy confesses how her life was ruined by crime, from a heart-pounding seduction by dealer Tony Pettrillo to a dope smuggler and broken-down moll, sentenced to "three months in jail and a lifetime of regret". In 'Murder, Morphine and Me' the great Jack Cole heightens every emotional shock, every brutal shootout, to a histrionic rollercoaster—his panels shudder with violence, his lettering shrieks in terror, his story-telling races furiously. This infamous story first appeared in *True Crime Comics* in 1948 and now some forty years later all of Cole's tough intense crime-dramas have been reprinted in two

*Mr. Monster Specials* (\$1.75/£1.25 import) from Eclipse Comics.

Jack Cole is better remembered for his surreal stretchable superhero Plastic Man, but Ron Goulart's biography, *Focus on Jack Cole* (\$5.95/£3.95 import) from Fantagraphics Books, covers his whole career, right up to his watercolour 'Females' gags in *Playboy* and his unexplained suicide at the age of 43. There are plenty of dates and details in this useful reference book, but few fresh insights and some disappointingly murky reprint selections. For some colour *Plastic Man* classics try finding *DC SPECIAL 17* (1971) in the back issue boxes at your specialist shop for a true taste of Old King Cole.

## CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME

COMICS HAVE BEEN JUMPING on the Band Aid wagon to help raise money for famine relief in Africa since April 1985, when the *Food for Thought* comic presented new work on the theme of world hunger by almost forty UK creators. America followed this lead with teams of top comic artists and writers jamming on two superhero epics set in Africa from Marvel and DC. And *Comic Relief* was started by us daily cartoonists Garry Trudeau, Milton Caniff and Charles Schulz who got their newspaper neighbours to address the theme in their Thanksgiving Day submissions, which were collected into a book.

Now two years later comes *Cartoon Aid*, the most lavishly printed fund-raiser yet. It reprints practically everyone's favourite characters: from Spider-Man, Tom Cruise's choice, to Prince's preference, Casper the Friendly Ghost, Judge Dredd and Noddy, Krazy Kat and Mickey Mouse, Tintin (the whole of *The Black Island*) and Dennis the Menace (*The Beano* has never looked so crisp n' bright!) are together for the first time under the same bulging hardcovers for £9.95, 'all nett' proceeds to the Band Aid Trust'. This 500-page tome is a wonderful omnibus, a perfect gift for any child and excellent publicity for all involved.

## SENSE OF DREDD

IT WAS ASKING FOR TROUBLE. To celebrate the 500th Prog of the 'Galaxy's Greatest Comic' *2000AD*, alien host Mighty Tharg thought it would be a really zarzy idea to get all his script and art robots to do a 'jam' strip about their pet peeves. Little did he realise what spleen would be vented. Two of the definitive 'Judge Dredd' artists Mike McMahon and Brian Bolland seized the opportunity to get back at publishing megacorp IPC and drew their first new pages in years, sharply co-scripted by Pat Mills. Mike slammed into today's slavish imitators who copy his and Brian's styles. Brian complained how his versions of Dredd get endlessly recycled for merchandising and foreign editions, 'reprinted eight times without me getting so much as a drachma'. Bolland's farewell picture of Dredd has him bouncing on a hobby-horse with a bowler and carrot-nose. Not surprisingly, these perks hit some sensitive nerves with their near-the-knuckle pages and so they were bumped at the last minute. Nevertheless the five pages that did see print in *2000AD 500* included some pretty broad swipes at IPC's policies. The lack of

reprint royalties or character rights offered by publishers IPC has spurred many former 'droids' like Bolland, McMahon, Mills, Kevin O'Neill, Dave Gibbons, Alan Moore and Alan Davis to search for better deals elsewhere, especially in America. Joining them more recently have been John Wagner, Ian Gibson, Steve Dillon, Cam Kennedy and Bryan Talbot, who has left to continue his own series, *Luther Arkwright*.

But there is perhaps one positive aspect to this drain of thrill-power—it gives some young bloods a chance, even if only an apprenticeship for the American comics. Making their debut in the months ahead will be: John Hickleton taking over 'Nemesis' and David Roach on a 'Purity' spin-off, both written by Pat Mills and a very different mood on 'Judge Dredd' from Dave McKean. And with the switch to better quality paper and colour with Prog 520, the 10th anniversary issue, *2000AD* upgrades its image and regenerates for another scroting decade. And in development sometime in the future is a big budget film from us movie moguls Pressman & Lippincott of the sinister *Judge Dredd*.





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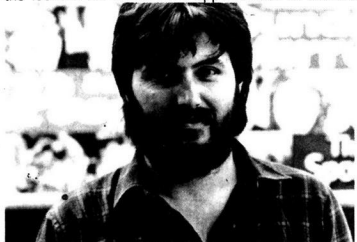
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STEVE BELL. Britain's big hairy monster of political satire, is quaffing European lager and Goulash soup before a Forbidden Planet signing session and in between each quaff he talks about *Waiting for the Upturn*, which is something of a departure for him, as it is his first all-original illustrated book combining text, cartoons and photos.

Three years ago Methuen put forward the idea of my doing a book that looks at the North-South divide in this great country of ours. We all have strange prejudices about the way things are up North, and vice versa. I think the division is particularly strong at the moment with what this Government is up to. The book started with a semi-serious intent, to do a sort of documentary job. Brian Homer designs my books and is a photographer. We wrote it together and used his photographs for me to scrawl cartoons onto. I've always loved defacing photographs. We worked out the plot and then allocated geographical chunks of areas of the country we knew. The story is narrated by a briefcase which is also a state-of-the-art computer, video-sound recorder, and commentator for the entire book. In fact the briefcase is the most sensible character in the book!

The main characters are two American creeps, the big one called Mouth, the small one called Trousers, on the lookout for investment opportunities in the UK.



They're gross caricatures of American types: one is into all kinds of food-stuffs and the other's into all kinds of weaponry, a mini-survivalist! The book's not anti-American, it's anti-business, it's anti the Nigel Lawson enterprise-culture ethic that's being thrown at us a lot lately. That ethic believes that if you don't tax the rich, but give them incentives, then everything will be hunky-dory and we'll get out of the recession. Which is a lot of bullshit, because if you look at the evidence of history, if you don't tax the rich, the rich just take their



## MOUTH AND TROUSERS

money off elsewhere! Goodbye British industry! We're also getting at the things businesses invest in—not producing anything useful, just profitable, in this case snacks and weapons.

The main difference I see between the North and South is economic. It seems more possible to start a small business down South, because there's much more economic activity than there is, say, in Sheffield, where major industries have shut down and unemployment is high. How many corner tobacconists can a region like that support? The Tories want to make Britain more like America and abolish Socialism. They say the reason America is doing so well is that it doesn't have a Socialist party. But America isn't really doing that well, in the long term it's up shit creek, it's in debt to the rest of the world.

I hope we can do an animated version of *Waiting for the Upturn*, condensed to about twenty minutes. Bob Godfrey's started on the story-boards and we've recorded about half the soundtrack already. I've learnt a lot about animation from working with Bob on two cartoon films for Channel 4. They've had them about a year now but not shown them yet. I'm not sure why, maybe it's political censorship?!

*Waiting for the Upturn*, £9.95 Hardback and £4.95 Paperback is published by Methuen, who have also brought out a new *Maggie's Farm* collection for £4.95 Paperback.

## POPULAR GRAPHICS

'I have these studs/  
I have these  
badges/These are my  
medals/And  
I wear them with  
pride.'

On *Leather Jacket*, the new single by Hull-based band *International Rescue*, a proud owner of a Triumph leather jacket wakes up to the nightmare of a decomposing bull that wants its skin back.

To illuminate his song, guitarist Dave Waller has penned a giant Giger-esque horror comic which he is animating in colour for the group's forthcoming video. Get both record and comic for £5 from: Single-Minded Promotions, 35 Talgarth Road, London W14 9QB.



## SCOPE

AMID AMERICA'S TENSE TRADE WAR WITH JAPAN, TWO US COMIC BOOK COMPANIES ARE BUYING IN WHOLE JAPANESE MANGA SERIES THIS SUMMER. FIRST SHELLED OUT A REPORTED \$2 MILLION FOR THE SAMURAI SAGA *LONE WOLF AND CUB*, AND NOT TO BE ECLIPSED BY SUCH THRIFT, ECLIPSE HAVE SIGNED UP TO CO-PUBLISH THREE BI-WEEKLY COMICS. MANGA-JAPAN'S NEW GROWTH EXPORT ■ THHHHRRP! LEO BAKENDALE BOUNCES BACK IN HIS MANIC NEW ALBUM FROM KNOCKABOUT AND BLOWS A RASPBERRY AT BEANO PUBLISHERS D.C. THOMSON AS HIS LAWSUIT TO WIN THE RIGHTS TO HIS CHARACTERS LIKE 'THE BASH STREET KIDS' HITS THE HIGH COURT. SHADES OF *BLEAK HOUSE*? ■ ANGOULÊME, FRANCE'S COMICS FESTIVAL, HONoured ONE-MAN SCRIPT FACTORY JACQUES LOB THIS YEAR IN AN EXHIBITION GROUPED AROUND A VAST INTERACTIVE TYPEWRITER AND AN AWFULLY BIG POLYSTYRENE MODEL OF LOB'S SPOOF SUPERHERO SUPER DUPONT IN BERET, UNDERWEAR AND CARPET SLIPPERS. NEXT YEAR'S STAR IS MASTER FANTASIST ENKI BILAL (AND ABOUT TIME TOO) ■ IF BRITISH SUNDAY PAPERS DON'T POOH-POOH COMIC STRIPS COMPLETELY (LIKE THE HIGH-MINDED *TIMES* AND *TELEGRAPH*), THEY GIVE THEM SHORT SHRIFT OR FILL SPACE WITH AMERICAN FODDER. WHICH MAKES THE *NEWS ON SUNDAY*'S GAUDY FULL-COLOUR PAGES ALL THE MORE OUTSTANDING, AS THEY'RE CRAFTED BY 'BRITAIN'S NEW WAVE SUPERSTAR CARTOONISTS' MILLIGAN & MCCARTHY AND MILLS & FABRY, BRIGHTENING UP YOUR SUNDAYS ■ SEE WHAT TODAY'S FRENCH CARTOONISTS LIKE SEMPÉ OR FAISANT THINK OF BRITAIN IN *FRENCH HUMOUR?* TILL JULY 14TH AT THE FRENCH INSTITUTE, 17 QUEENSBERRY PLACE, LONDON SW7 ■ *COMIC WORLD* SHOWS ORIGINAL COMIC BOOK ART, PAINTING, GRAPHICS, EVEN SCULPTURE, AT THE YOUNG UNKNOWNNS GALLERY, 82 THE CUT, LONDON SE1 TUES-SAT TILL JUNE 27TH ■

# TeRmItE · FraterniTy

Something went wrong one semester at Atticus State College--

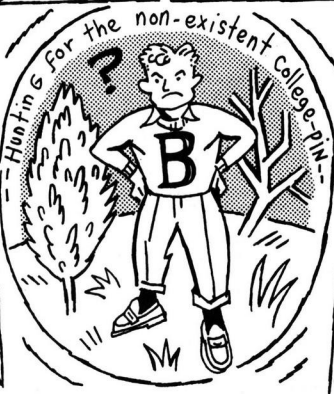


Fall came and the freshmen were settling in as normal



Time-honoured entry rituals to Fraternity Houses took place:

13 hour marathons of Ravel's "Bolero"--



--Having your under wear hung on the college weather vane.

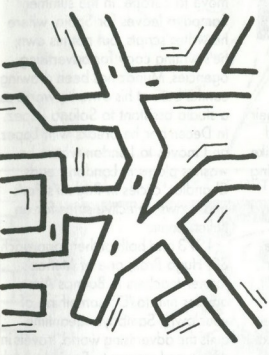


But in Phi-Beta-Kappa house the rules were different---





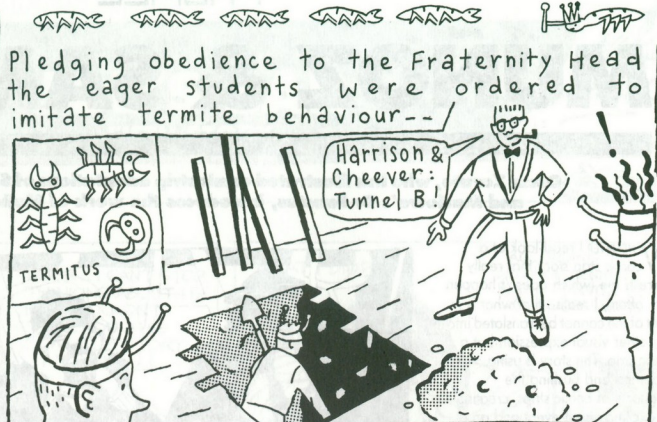
They dug tunnels under the campus--



The Frat-head's secret plan could then have come true:



To undermine the college's foundations and cause its collapse!



Some dropped out--



-- While most continued in their quest for social status!



But--who'd have predicted the visiting building inspectors?



And who would have predicted the change from Big-Man-on-Campus to the biggest social outcast?



© John Bagnall '87



# MUÑOZ & SAMPAYO

**Oscar Zarate, who has illustrated comic strip adaptations of Shakespeare's *Othello* and Marlowe's *Dr Faustus*, introduces the work of Muñoz and Sampayo.**

WHENEVER I read-look at a comic strip story that really interests me (which doesn't happen very often), I realise that what is in front of me cannot be translated into any other visual expression but a comic strip. The story is using, exploring and pushing the language of comic strips, creating an exciting visual event and an exchange of experiences that I am part of. If this sounds rather defensive, it's because it is; what I am defending is the potential of an incredible language as an art form.

But the reality, I feel, is that what ninety percent of comics communicate is irrelevant. Why irrelevant? Because I cannot detect any critical involvement of the creators in what they are producing. I can detect the hands that make the story and the drawing, but not the idea behind them sustaining that frame, nor the personal emotions or commitments towards that frame, towards the story, towards the language.

Comics have certainly developed some extraordinary visual sophistication and ever more pleasant pretty artwork. As the pictures get more stylistically pretty, we are gradually being pushed into a corner where visual amnesia rules. The lives of these picture stories are ephemeral because they don't provide a challenge, they don't carry the possibility of an exchange between creator and reader of a certain feeling, an idea, a sensibility. Just mindless pretty pictures. I don't respect any comic strip, no matter how attractive, if I can't feel any commitment from the creators towards each frame. Without a position, all is lost.

Comic strips are a visual graphic language which allows us to explore our emotions, to deal with our ideas and communicate them. When a new story by Carlos Sampayo and José Muñoz comes my way, whether I like it or not is just a question of taste and that's not important. What is important is that in every story they always have a very strong clear point to put across and a clear idea of how they want to express it. They demand more of their audience than most. They demand an exchange from you,



your concentration. Your expectations of how to read-look at a comic strip have to be updated. Their stories repay a second reading. Each frame has a world of its own, operating on different levels. One level is the actual story, but behind all the levels they are creating another story—a mood. You are involved in the world of Muñoz and Sampayo.

Theirs is an oppressive black and white world. Muñoz's drawings, his characters, settings, small details that people his frames, are not there to fill the frame with apologies. They are a vital part of the story. Sometimes they are the story. Every visual element, even the smallest one, is a protagonist that fights to be listened to, gradually becoming a threatening presence that haunts you, full of screams, the most articulate way to express the overwhelming sense of anxiety that permeates their frames, their stories, our way of living. Muñoz's black and white unleashes unique images, because they come directly from his experiences and his dialogues between his heart and the black ink. Above all they are expressed with passion.

All their characters living in New York are peripheral to society; they are unable to understand society, so they react against it. Muñoz and Sampayo had been creating stories about the Big Apple for ten years before they actually visited the city. Their vision of New York may or may not be accurate. Nevertheless I do believe in the world they have created there. It's a world within

another world, populated by human beings from different countries who felt alienated in their own homelands, or were pushed out of their countries, but still feel like foreigners in New York. They bring with them different personal geographical maps in their lives. In a sense Muñoz and Sampayo's interpretation of New York is the story that underlies much of their work—people in transit encountering each other with different languages, stories, sunsets. The way Sampayo edits his text and balloons seems to mirror the fragmentary nature of many of these encounters—conversations begun halfway, left unfinished. You become aware that what Carlos Sampayo decides not to say is as important as what he says. He leaves room for you to do more than consume a story. The silences in his frames are part of the story; they demand reflective concentration, they demand that you stay with it.

A comic strip is a marriage of words and pictures in a series of frames. Yet there is usually one over-rated partner—the pictures, at the expense of the story-line. This dominance of the visual aspect ensures that the comic strip remains stuck in a narrow, limited, provincial vacuum.

Muñoz and Sampayo are trying to create a true marriage between words and pictures, pictures and words, pushing the language of comics to deal with their emotions, their ideas. There are moments in their work that affect me deeply. What I am witnessing is a

formidable comic strip. Today, for me, that is a privilege. ●

MARCH 1971, EZEIZA AIRPORT, BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA. Artist José Muñoz and writer Carlos Sampayo meet for the first time thanks to the departure of their mutual friend, Oscar Zarate. They promise to get together the following week. It will be three years before they see each other again.

In 1972, owing to the political situation in Argentina, both of them move to Europe. In the summer Sampayo leaves for Spain, where he writes scripts, but not his own; he's writing copy for advertising agencies. Muñoz has been drawing comics but not his own; he works at a studio assistant to Solano Lopez. In December he breaks with Lopez, and moves to London where he washes plates in London, reads Chandler, cycles in Regent's Park and draws detective strips for an Italian comic.

1973 and both of them approach 30. Hugo Pratt, one of Muñoz's former teachers in Buenos Aires, advises him to "Do something of your own." Sampayo meantime quits the advertising world, travels in Africa and returns to Spain to hawc out eight books in a year for a commercial publishing house.

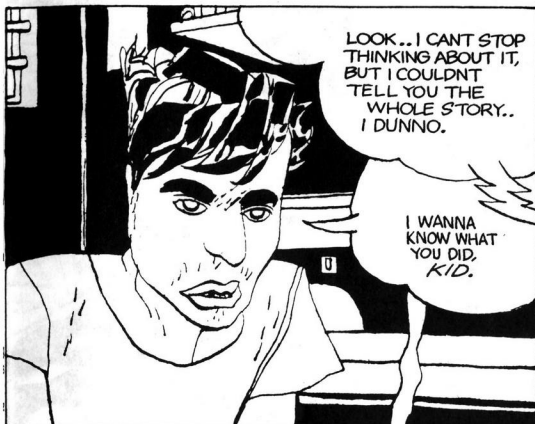
May 1974, London. Muñoz is bound for Spain and Zarate suggests he look Sampayo up and try doing something with him. From their second meeting in Castell de Fels near Barcelona, they begin a remarkable creative friendship that has endured and matured over thirteen years.

Their first character is Alack Sinner, a former New York cop who quits the police force, disgusted by their corruption, to become a private eye. A bi-monthly *Sinner* magazine is to be launched this summer from Fantagraphics. In one episode Alack Sinner meets Sophie a Polish anarchist, who in her own stories gets caught up in a revolution in Mexico. The lives of the people who frequent Sinner's favourite watering hole, Joe's Bar, fill another series of short stories. Two of these have been translated in *Row 3 and 6*. The fifth in the series appears here. *Paul Gravel*



# JOE'S BAR

## FIFTH STORY



TRANSLATION: NICK CAISTOR. LETTERING: TREVS PHOENIX.





STRAWBERRY  
ICE CREAM.

YEAH... THE SAME  
AGAIN FOR ME.



I SAW YOU  
COME IN HERE,  
SO...

WAITER!  
THIS  
OLIVE  
IS  
OFF!

WELL,  
UH...



UH, MY DAD  
WENT TO THE  
BANK... SO I  
CAME IN TO  
EAT.



WELL...  
I'M NOT  
REALLY  
HUNGRY.

IF YOU  
CAME TO  
EAT, HOW  
COME YOU'RE  
ONLY HAVING  
AN ICE CREAM?



SHALL I  
OR SHANT  
I?

WOULD YOU LIKE  
TO SEE TONIGHTS  
GAME?

NO,  
I DON'T LIKE  
FOOTBALL.  
YOU CAN ASK  
ME SOME  
WHERE ELSE,  
THOUGH...

**WHY THE HECK  
DID I EVER MEN-  
TION FOOTBALL?**

WELL, NOW WHAT?  
ASK HER OUT!  
YEAH, ASK HER!  
ME?  
YEAH, YOU, WHO ELSE?





TELLING IT.. BUT I MYSELF HAVE NO IDEA HOW IT ALL HAPPENED - THOUGH I GUESS I DO. I KNOW BUT I DON'T WANT TO REMEMBER. THAT'S IT-- (I DON'T WANT TO KNOW IT NOW.

YEP, I'M GONNA HAVE TO BUY A PAIR OF SHOES

ADUBADU ADUBADU RABBI

ADUBADU ADUBADU RABBI

HI MIKE, I WAS JUST IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD.. ARE YOU GOING TO ASK ME OUT AGAIN?

I, UH... MY DAD DOESNT FEEL TOO GOOD.. WOULD YOU COME WITH ME? TO OUR HOUSE, I MEAN

UGH!

WHATS UP, MIKE? DON'T YOU LIKE GIRLS?

WHAT, ME?

NO, RABBI CARLEBACH. THIS /S MIKE WEISS I'M TALKING TO, ISNT IT?

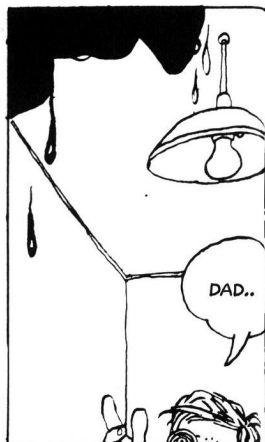
NO  
OIL

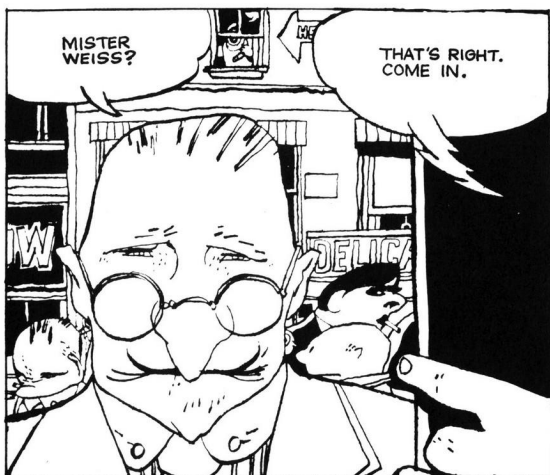
LATE NEWS

MIKE...

MIKE - IF YOU WANT ME TO BE YOUR GIRL...

Dark  
Mushy

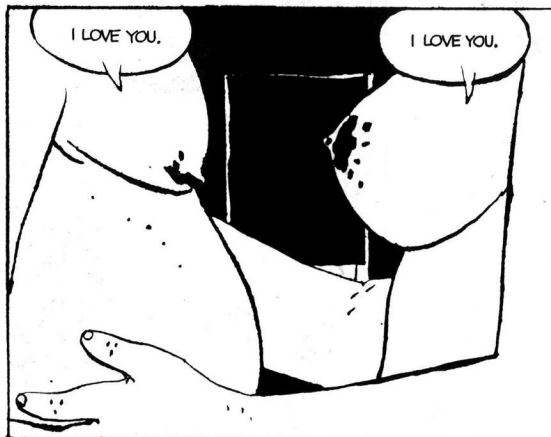
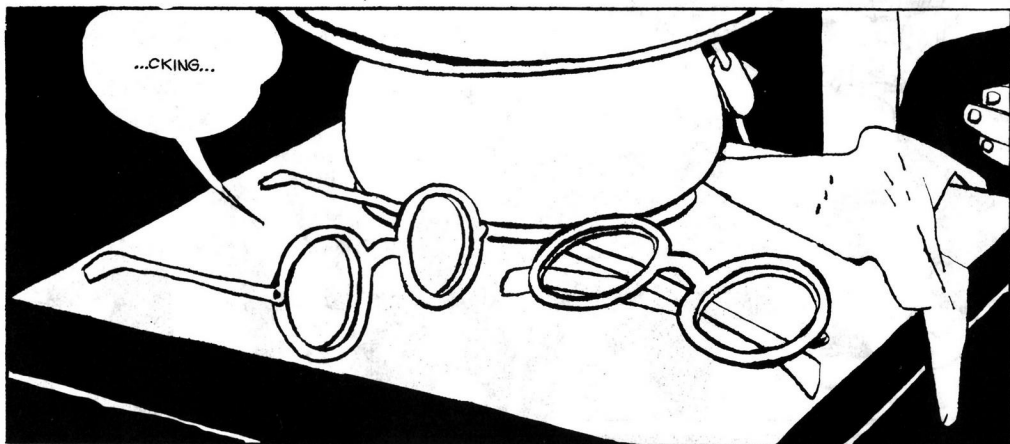












CONTINUED ON PAGE 50



"INNOVATIVE, LITERATE –  
QUITE SIMPLY STUNNING!"

– JAMES HERBERT

# SWAMP THING.

Written by ALAN MOORE. Illustrated by  
STEVE BISSETTE and JOHN TOTLEBEN.

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a living thing with a face. If the swamp had a spirit  
and that spirit walked like a man. . . .*

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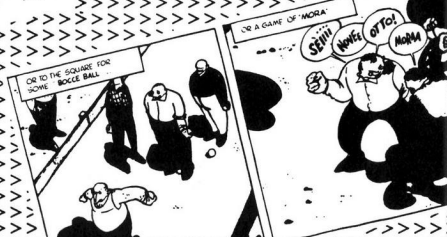
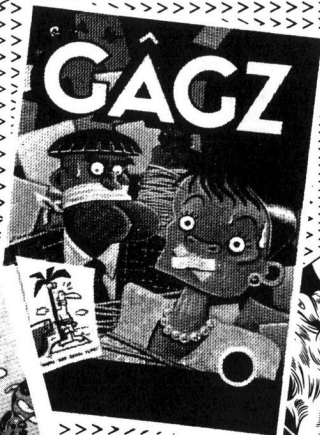
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## LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER

Hunt Emerson and D.H. Lawrence

Might I observe that this is not only the best Hunt Emerson that I've ever seen, it's also the best D.H. Lawrence? Turning his deranged sensibilities to a work of this length and stature has brought a sustained sense of tightness and structure to Hunt's work that is normally eschewed in favour of his distinctive surreal and spontaneous narrative flow.

As for Lawrence, he has also been well served by the collaboration. In its original form, the passion and strength of his writing is often undercut by its clichés. The stereotypical Lawrentian hero, a horny-handed and inarticulately passionate son of the soil, has become slightly absurd to contemporary eyes, and this absurdity makes it very difficult to read the work in the spirit with which it was no doubt written.

Emerson's Lady Chatterley avoids this pitfall precisely because in Hunt's world everything is absurd. Although his style becomes looser and more confident with each new offering, the pictures here have all the ec-like attention to background detail that has characterised his work for so long. Flowers blossom into ludicrously sensual shapes as the passion in the narrative heats up, and in the course of showing off his manly craftsmanlike skills to Constance Chatterley, Mellors hammers, saws, dons a beret to build a masterpiece, uses a sewing machine and builds a robot chicken. As I say, everything is absurd, and once this slant on reality has been accepted by the reader, the inherent ridiculous qualities in the original work vanish in the context of the surrounding lunacy and it becomes possible to take characters and situations very seriously indeed. The moons and plant pots in the scenes where Constance teeters on the brink of frustration-born breakdown and starts to doubt the reality of her experience, while faintly echoing George Herriman, do nothing to detract from the sudden and affecting sense of emotional darkness and isolation that pervades these images. In the startling juxtaposition of the serious and the satirical, both qualities are contrasted and enhanced, the work thriving as a result.

What sounded initially like the most unlikely pairing of the century has turned out to be something very, very good indeed. Funny, profound and passionate by turn, this adaptation also has the advantage, I'm assured by the author, of only being adapted from those pages that the book falls open at when you pick up the library copy by the spine, saving the reader the endless misery of trudging through heavy-breathing descriptions of the thistles and wild sukebald for hours before getting to the good bits. Highly recommended.

Alan Moore

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## THE KNIGHT IS ALWAYS DARKEST ...

A poetical statement on Batman



## DARK KNIGHT

Frank Miller

I saw a version of *Thunderbirds* performed by two time artists last year. They mimicked exactly the movements of Gerry Anderson puppets, giving the elements several clever twists. The best moment was when Captain Scarlet dances with Lady Penelope to a Barry Gray tune. It was inconsistent with the actual TV show, but it made a kind of poetical statement on the programme. I think *Dark Knight* is a poetical statement on *Batman*.

In the original *MAD* magazine, think how Harvey Kurtzman portrayed Batman and Superman (with the help of Wallace Wood in both cases). In both stories, 'Stuporman' and 'Batboy and Rubin', he created devastating hilarious satires. But without the humour, we're left with a dilemma. Kurtzman raised some important questions: Why do superheroes exist? What motivates them? How do they survive in the world? He presented distressing portraits—Captain Marvel as a mercenary, Superman as a naive odd, Batman as a malicious, criminal blood-sucker. No laughing matter. No other satire strips get near the heart of matter like this.

Miller seems to take this same questioning viewpoint. I think the three *Superman* movies may have helped him—they pointed out the physical difficulties of being a superhero in a big American city, albeit tongue-in-cheek. I don't think Miller is necessarily portraying the Real World. The topography of *Dark Knight* is more authentic than most comics—solid architecture, TV news etc. Yet the core of it is still the obscure mystery that has always been the heart of *Batman*. Miller's gone right back to the roots of Kane's creation. In its original conception, Batman was terrifying, visually alarming and his exact purpose in fighting crime was ambiguous, solitary, unexplained. Miller has taken this incarnation of Batman, enlarged on it, exaggerated it and thrust it into a brutal futuristic setting. Batman is still the familiar face and character, but Miller has closed in on the nuances of his thought processes, trying to nail down just what it is that makes a man behave like this. We have slow-motion re-runs of his parents' death, as though Miller had access to rare unseen footage of some important historical event. He's not defacing the icon, he's restoring it. In confronting the *Batman* mythology's inner workings, Miller finds more and more to relate about it.

Let's take another tangent. Sergio Leone did similar things with the traditional Western movie

format, in his Dollar trilogy and *Once Upon a Time in the West*. In the latter, many Western devotees thought it pure blasphemy when they saw Henry Fonda appear as the Villain. In John Ford's Westerns Fonda was always the Hero—Leone was defiling Ford's hallowed ground. He completely changed the Western genre, reincarnating its spirit into a more cynical realistic frame. In the aftermath of Vietnam, American pioneer cowboys couldn't be heroes any more. Leone, like Miller, had begun to question their motives.

Miller calls up potent forces in *Dark Knight*, and deliberately clashes them together for outstanding effect. Apparent dilemmas and insoluble tensions are presented. Batman is hostile to official law and order, takes sadistic pleasure in the torture of criminals, and by the end of the story he's joined forces with all the criminal elements of Gotham. Robin is a 13 year-old girl. Superman is the tool of an extreme right-wing government. Though deeply unpleasant, this has an immediately jarring effect that makes you sit up and take notice of what Miller is saying. Through the comics rubric of these two important heroes, we see his real targets being pinpointed. More than a radical re-interpretation of *Batman*, it's political and social satire, combined with a nightmare fantasy of brutality and inhumanity. It's a grand scale pessimistic overview.

I read the whole book in a weekend—it left me breathless, a stunning emotional impact. From little clashes before, it had seemed unapproachable—tiny frames, lots of text, and some highly distressing stand-out pages. Also I've never read anything by Miller before now. He's very clever. I admire his ellipsis, his minimalist techniques, clipped dialogue and jump cuts. There's a lot of cruelty and brutality, but much of the violence is implied, usually via TV news reports. I like the use of the Shakespearean pathetic fallacy of thunderstorms to announce Batman's dramatic re-arrival, which later re-emerges as the more sinister electro-magnetic storms after the nuclear blast. He builds up an intricate visual vocabulary—preparing the reader for all of his strategically laid plot devices. The story is a minefield.

To misuse a common cliché, this is real state-of-the-art comics. But I certainly would not like to see all comics proceed in this way. There's no denying the real loss of innocence in *Dark Knight*, plus it is relentlessly humourless, claustrophobic and deeply cynical. But it still remains effective and surprising.

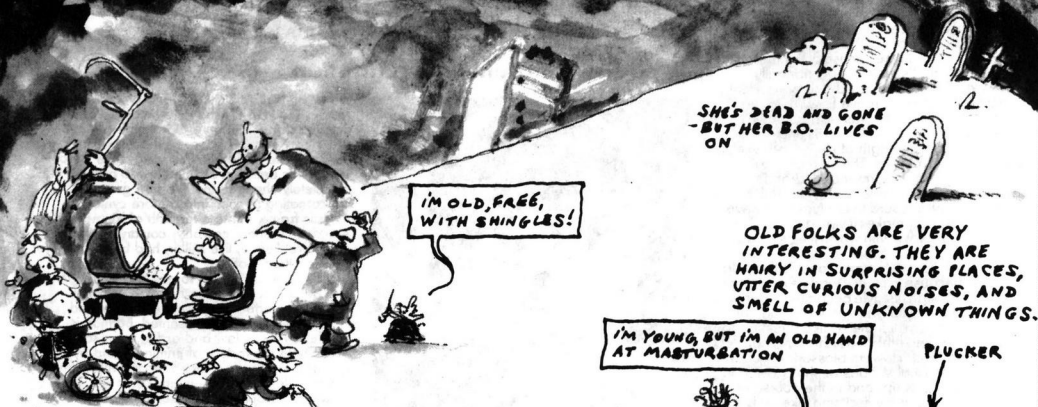
Ed Pines

Titan Books £8.95/DC Comics & Warner Books \$12.95 192pp Paperback



'Batboy and Rubin' by Harvey Kurtzman and Wally Wood from *MAD*

# COME ON, GET OLD!



YOUTH IS OUT — OLD AGE IS IN!  
THE YOUTH OF TODAY ARE DULLARDS,  
SELF-OBSSESSED, THEIR ONLY  
FRIEND IS THE COMPUTER.

THE OLD CELEBRATE,  
THE YOUNG PONTIFICATE

SHE'S DEAD AND GONE  
— BUT HER B.O. LIVES  
ON

OLD FOLKS ARE VERY  
INTERESTING. THEY ARE  
HAIRY IN SURPRISING PLACES,  
UTTER CURIOUS NOISES, AND  
SMELL OF UNKNOWN THINGS.

I'M YOUNG, BUT I'M AN OLD HAND  
AT MASTURBATION

PLUCKER



THE YOUTH HAVE HAD THEIR DAY. THE MEDIA  
YAWN AT THEIR PATHETIC SECOND-HAND  
FASHIONS.

YOUNG GUNS TRY TO KEEP IN WITH  
THE GERIATRIC 'FACES ABOUT  
TOWN' BY AFFECTING BALDNESS  
— AND STARTING EACH  
CONVERSATION WITH  
"I REMEMBER WHEN..."

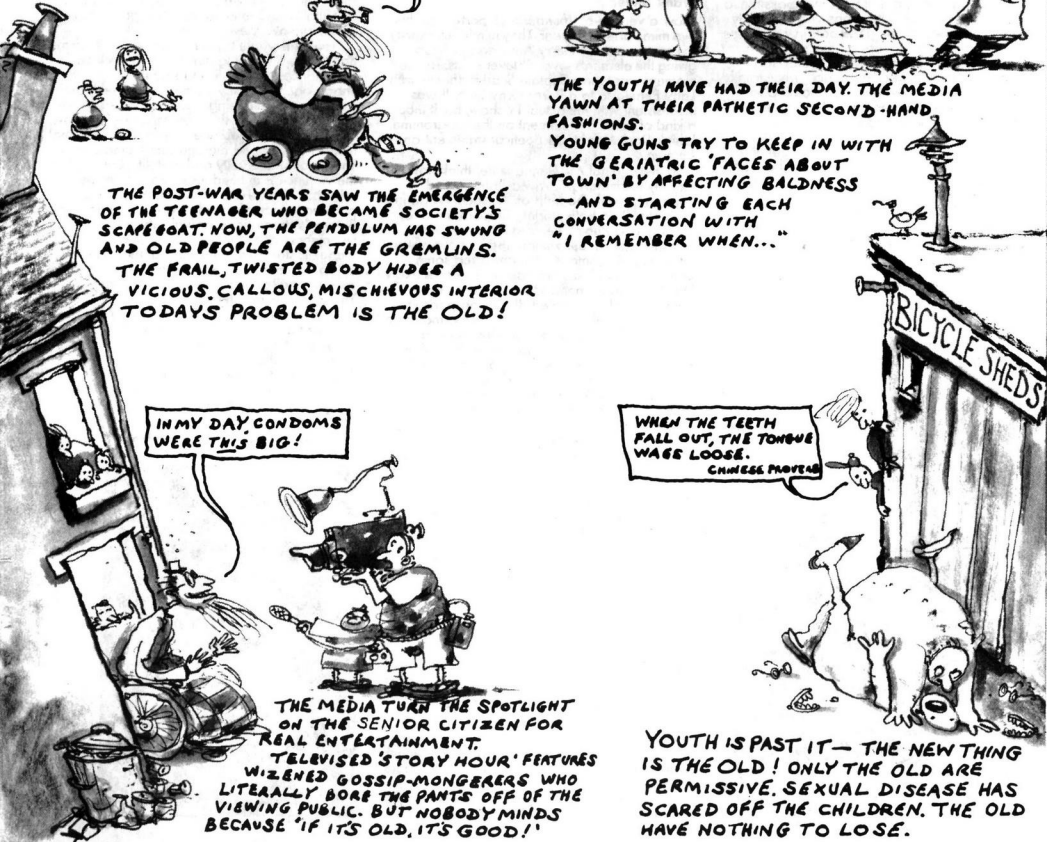
THE POST-WAR YEARS SAW THE EMERGENCE  
OF THE TEENAGER WHO BECAME SOCIETY'S  
SCAPEGOAT. NOW, THE PENDULUM HAS SWUNG  
AND OLD PEOPLE ARE THE GREMLINS.  
THE FRAIL, TWISTED BODY HIDES A  
VICIOUS, CALLOUS, MISCHIEVOUS INTERIOR.  
TODAYS PROBLEM IS THE OLD!

IN MY DAY, CONDOMS  
WERE THIS BIG!

WHEN THE TEETH  
FALL OUT, THE TONGUE  
WAGS LOOSE.  
CHINESE PROVERB

THE MEDIA TURN THE SPOTLIGHT  
ON THE SENIOR CITIZEN FOR  
REAL ENTERTAINMENT.  
TELEVISED 'STORY HOUR' FEATURES  
WIZENED GOSSIP-MONGERERS WHO  
LITERALLY BORE THE PANTS OFF OF THE  
VIEWING PUBLIC. BUT NOBODY MINDS  
BECAUSE 'IF IT'S OLD, IT'S GOOD!'

YOUTH IS PAST IT — THE NEW THING  
IS THE OLD! ONLY THE OLD ARE  
PERMISSIVE. SEXUAL DISEASE HAS  
SCARED OFF THE CHILDREN. THE OLD  
HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE.



## CRITTERS

## Comics Anthology

You know, I find it hard to get on with the ever-increasing flood of Mutant-Kicking-and-Shooting-Teenage-Rodent comics. The key to this problem lies in the past among my childhood days when my sister Margaret had a gentle grey rabbit by the name of Smokey. That is, he was gentle, until the provocative teasing by me, my Dad and the rest of the children turned him into a leaping lupine terror. Buck teeth flashed in the sun as he drove his enemies from the back garden.

The above story almost runs like an episode of 'Usaki Yajimbo', Stan Sakai's samurai rabbit strip, an almost regular feature of *Critters* Fantagraphics' once-a-month funny animal comic. Gathering work of various moods and styles, editor Kim Thompson is proving that animals don't have to carry weapons and slay each other. Even though some do.

Take Usaki for instance. Lots of nasty work with sword, spear and arrow, but the action is only one part of the story. The simple but strong plots unfold in an authentic-looking re-creation of medieval Japan, drawn in a Japanese-print-meets-cute-animal style (which, believe it or not, works very well). When the action does occur, the nasty stuff is well balanced by the wonderful facial expressions.



The other action strip is Steven Gallacci's 'Birthright'. Intelligent, very serious and well drawn with great shading, but it doesn't do all that much for me. I go for crazy slapstick myself, and no slapstick comes crazier than the work of Mark Armstrong. Wacky, wild, wonderful and weird. All right stuff, the action fairly flies off the pages (critical critics). Other wild 'n' crazy guys are: Ty Templeton, creator of 'Dinosaurs at the Bar' in issue 11, which says all there is to be said about evolution in one page with a punch line I'd give my front teeth for. Mike Kazaleh of *Captain Jack* came gives us 'Santa Claus v. the Bats', again in issue 11, and for this strip alone he deserves saint-hood. Freddy Milton draws like Disney but sprinkles a bit of grit into the proceedings—dragons, haunted houses as well as schizoid graffiti artists and not a human in sight.

All of which in no way sums up *Critters*! Bob Lynch

Fantagraphics Books \$2.00/£1.50 32pp monthly comic book, available from comic shops.

## WATCHMEN 7 'A Brother to Dragons'

Alan Moore, Dave Gibbons, John Higgins

Commenting on a single issue of *Watchmen* is like trying to review a single chapter of a novel, in isolation, before reaching the end. With *Watchmen 7* we have crossed the half-way line. We are reading a twelve issue series and should we forget, the clocks on the front cover are still counting down to a nuclear midnight. They now stand at five to twelve.

Here for the first time we get to see inside Daniel Dreiberg. Until now Dreiberg has been a whimpering nobody. A costumed hero who retired when they made heroes illegal, an overweight middle-aged non-entity with a crush on Laurie Juspeck. A failure.

Here we see a number of things. On one level Moore and Gibbons exploit the nostalgia of DC's 80 Page Giants. It's 'Secrets of the Batcave' time as Dan shows Laurie around his secret basement, metaphorically dusting off his spare uniforms, his Owl ship, his utility belt. But in listening to their conversation we understand what Dreiberg wanted to be—'It would have been like joining the Knights of the Round Table; being part of a fellowship of legendary

# MAUSTERPIECE

## Painful reminiscences of Hitler's Europe



### MAUS: A SURVIVOR'S TALE

Art Spiegelman

Since discovering his work in the mid '70s, I have been convinced that Art Spiegelman is perhaps the single most important comic creator working within the field and in my opinion *Maus* represents his most accomplished work to date. *Maus* began life in 1972 as a three page strip in *Funny Animals*, a comic from underground publisher Apex Novelties. In its three pages it recounts precisely the same story that fills over 150 pages here, although obviously in severely truncated form. Although it fails to transcend the final black 'Mauschwitz' punch line, the strip is bleak and powerful in its own right and marked a serious period of transition in his work. While his earliest work for *Bijou* comes across as a sort of primitive and scatological Edward Lear, with pieces like this prototype *Maus* and its contemporary 'Prisoner Of The Hell Planet' Spiegelman established a new and fascinating direction that was to take him through his exemplary work for *Arcade* in the mid '70s to the genesis of *Rat* in 1980, where he resurrected *Maus* in this much broader and ambitious form.

This version is at once simpler and more complex than its predecessor. Instead of the intricately rendered textures and fastidious use of lettering used in the three pager, here Spiegelman opts for a loose and simple style, barely-refined thumbnail drawings that capture all the vitality and spontaneity of the preliminary sketch while remaining perfectly lucid. Visually the book has a commendable air of understatement throughout, as exemplified by his decision not to overload his central metaphor by

depicting the Nazi 'Katzen' as physically gigantic compared to the roden 'Juden'.

The complexity of *Maus* comes in the story rather than the art. Framing the detailed and painful reminiscences of his increasingly cranky father with scenes in which we examine Spiegelman's relationship with his parent as he tries to research his book, the author presents us with a work that is self-referential without being clumsy. A work in which we clearly see the interaction of fiction and reality, even to the point where Spiegelman the elder becomes depressed reading a copy of 'Prisoner of the Hell Planet' drawn by his son in 1972 and which deals with the suicide of his mother—Vladek Spiegelman's first wife. The eerie resonance of this with later scenes in which the father is berated for burning his wife's diaries in a fit of depression after her death by a son thirsty for historical detail has the power and conviction that only occur with a work as exceptionally honest as this one. Intensely subjective, it manages to encompass subjects as sensitive and diverse as the holocaust one one hand and the yawning emotional gulf between parents and children on the other, all in a fashion that is at once revealing, moving and innovative.

*Maus* surely marks one of the high points of the comic medium to date. It is perhaps the first genuine graphic novel in recent times, and as such its significance cannot be overstated. Please read it.

Alan Moore

US edition from Pantheon Books 160 pp, paperback \$8.95 + post via Raw, 27 Greene Street, New York NY 10013. UK edition, hardback from Andre Deutsch, paperback from Penguin, published September '87.

beings'—and what his conclusions are—That sounds like the kind of costume that could really mess you up? Is there any other sort? His costume, his mask, are hung in the closet.

But the mask is Dreiberg; the man is Nite Owl. Underneath his boring exterior, his class, his life, as Laurie comments, beautiful. But it's a beauty that for the last nine years has only surfaced in his ornithological articles, like the one 'reprinted' here, a dry but passionate plea for academics to see beyond classification to the underlying romance and magic of what they examine.

Meanwhile the plot moves on apace. Rorschach is still in prison; chronologically this issue takes place concurrently with the last issue's look at Rorschach's life, a pointer to the symmetry of the series as a whole and an upbeat counterpoint to the last issue's bleak worldview. And we are no nearer to unravelling the identity of the 'mask killer' (if he—or she—exists).

Moore's writing is remarkable. He catches the rhythms of speech so naturally, presents his world so seamlessly, that the whole seems effortless. The technique is tight and often innovative and, even when we are presented with an appearance of 'real time', invisible; there

are no fancy flashbacks or obvious ironic counterpoints, save for the contrast between Adrian Veidt's perfect televisual athletic performance and Dreiberg's real-life sexual performance.

Gibson's art has never been better. Each panel is a tight pocket of information, a semiotic heaven. Here he reaches what is, for me, his pinnacle: the central sequence (central, again, as with everything in this work, literally and metaphorically) of Dreiberg's nightmare followed by his dissociated wander around his house, a horned shadow. Sequences like these, like the panels of Dreiberg putting on his Nite Owl identity, like the final love scene in which Dreiberg is seen literally as a brother to dragons, are aesthetic delights, helped in no small measure by John Higgins' superb colouring.

The whole adds another chapter to what is undoubtedly the most ambitious work of science fiction since Gene Wolfe's *Book of the Sun*, and the most ambitious and, in my opinion, most successful graphic novel ever.

Neil Gaiman

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This book proves that the weekly magazine *The New Yorker* still has some of the best cartoonists in the world. Everyone is familiar with Chas Addams, if only from *The Addams Family* re-runs on tv. He's well represented here with other veterans like William Steig, Saul Steinberg, Chon Day, Robert Day. But there are scores of new talents at work, including two personal favourites, George Booth and the inimitable Roz Chast. Roz has a gentle line and wash drawing style, which she uses to put over her unique and extraordinary ideas. Much of her humour comes from complete unexpectedness.

## LITE BOOKS



In some ways she's an indicator of the new wave of *New Yorker* artists. They all still produce excellent bold drawings in *The New Yorker* tradition—some using charcoal and wash for old-fashioned rendering, others using very fluid economical pen lines. Everything you see is based on solid art ability. But I think the general tone of the humour has moved on somewhat.

*New Yorker* gags have always been thoughtful, subtle, downbeat. Now they're positively minimalist, inspired by an almost Zen-like brilliance. They may take a couple of readings before you see the point. They rely on many cultural and sociological references. And sometimes they use fairly oblique methods to put the idea across, avoiding clichés and never drawing things in a banal obvious manner. There's nothing as raw and vital as, for example, the great Peter Arno in this book, but you have a level of sophistication and intelligence that you rarely find in one place. Funny, beautiful and indispensable.

Ed Pinsent

Penguin Books £6.95 208 pages Perfect Bound Softback

## DEEP CITY

**Carlos Sampayo & Solano Lopez**

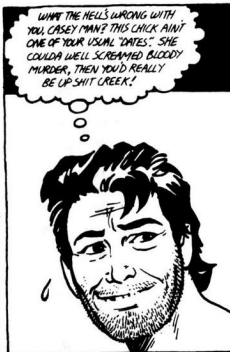
Solano Lopez, a robust globe trotting man of almost 60, was visiting London to deliver a war strip to the ipc offices. During his travels he has drawn literally hundreds of pages of comics around the world. One of his earliest successes in his native Argentina was 'El Elefante', a 350-page epic about a story-telling extra-terrestrial written by Hector Oesterheld.

Solano's sturdy drawings are most familiar in Britain thanks to the dozens of unsigned episodes he drew in British boys' weeklies, unique series like 'Kelly's Eye', 'Kraken' and 'Galaxus' (remember them?)

Today he has moved to Rio de Janeiro and was off the next day to Barcelona to meet Carlos Sampayo, a fellow Argentinian in exile and his collaborator on the book *Deep City*. Sampayo's gritty police dramas are set in Buenos Aires in the late Fifties and early Sixties and in their leading role is the burly hard-faced Commissioner Evaristo. Solano told me that Evaristo is based on the real-life Evaristo Meneses, actually a well-known detective in Buenos Aires in the early Sixties. His celebrated cases provided Sampayo with a nucleus for his

# LOST BRO'S

Goodbye *The Lucy Show*, Hello *Hollywood Wives*



## LOVE AND ROCKETS Book Two

**Jaime and Gilbert Hernandez**

'Everybody out of the pool!' This book reprints the third and fourth issues of *Love and Rockets* in their entirety, including the colour front and back covers, giving us what most readers feel are Los Bro's most sustainably inventive and well told stories to date, 'Heartbreak Soup' by Bert and '100 Rooms' by Jaime.

Both of these stories have extra pages added for this edition, ostensibly to make them less impenetrable for first-time readers and to satisfy the Bro's desire to 'fix up' bits they thought weren't quite right. Both sets of additions change the strips they are added to. Bert's prologue is a short history of all the characters in the village of Palomar who feature in his tale and sets a weird tone of curious drollery for what is to follow. Jaime's additions are interspersed throughout '100 Rooms'—two panels here, three panels there, six pages in all—and they seem expressly concerned with removing all the magic and subtle lyricism out of this strip and making it as dull and workaday as possible.

In a way, this seems to echo what Jaime is doing in the most current issues of *L&R*, whether from boredom or frustration or a sudden crisis of Naked City-itis; namely going into explicit detail on all those things that he used to just hint at and tantalise you with in the earlier days and showing you how you were misled and how

sordid and ordinary his characters in fact are, daydreaming and stargazing while they sit in oppressed poverty in their miserable skins. In keeping with this new policy, where once a whole attitude would be conveyed with a look or a posture, our rampant revisionist/reductionist now tosses all kinds of 'social history' in there. Goodbye *The Lucy Show*, Hello *Hollywood Wives*. This is an achievement! Δ '100 Rooms' is a richly funny, oblique, witty and intriguing story. At least in *L&R* 4 it is. Jaime's revised version is just embarrassing, the extra panels unwelcome and mostly badly written (the bedroom scene between Maggie and the Baron now has lines you haven't heard since you last saw a John Travolta film). Whatever it is that has got under Jaime's skin must be itching him to death. Too bad, it was nice while it lasted.

Bert draws less seductively, but he has always been the stronger writer and in this book's extended story his full talents wrap themselves around your imagination and draw you into a web of magical, spiritual and coincidental events that aren't easily explained, with complex and idiosyncratic characters that stand up for themselves. Read it. Then read it again for the things you missed the first time round. Then read it again for the sheer joy of reading it. Genius.

Trevs Phoenix

Fantagraphics Books \$9.95/£7.95 Import 150 pages Paperback  
*Love & Rockets* and *Heartbreak Soup* are published in the UK by Titan Books, £5.95 each.

stories. It's a shame that the opportunity has been missed to show some of this background—for example, photographs, newspaper clippings—in the book's introduction.

*Deep City* is not a documentary portrait of the real Commissioner; Lopez and Sampayo are creating their own version. Nevertheless the psychology of their character, the way he faces life, reflect a way of behaviour of many Argentinian males, like characters from the writings of Jorge Luis Borges. A former boxer, like Sampayo himself, Evaristo stays in the ring round after round, contending against the city's criminals. But the fighting is wearing him down and when he remembers his past, what is he left with today? In a telling scene, Evaristo finds a 'dangerous' lion that escaped from the city zoo and, stroking its mane, he says to it, 'You and I are walking around lost, friend.'

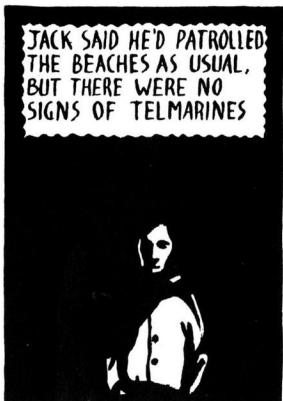
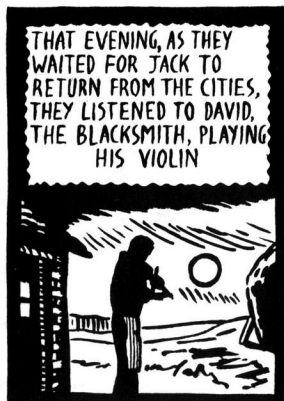
Sampayo writes tight understated scripts which make every word resonate and which complement Lopez' powerful sculptured illustrations. Together they create their violent and melancholic vision of a Buenos Aires that neither of them can ever really leave.

Paul Gravett

Catalan Communications \$10.95/£7.95 112pp Import paperback



# THE LIGHTED CITIES





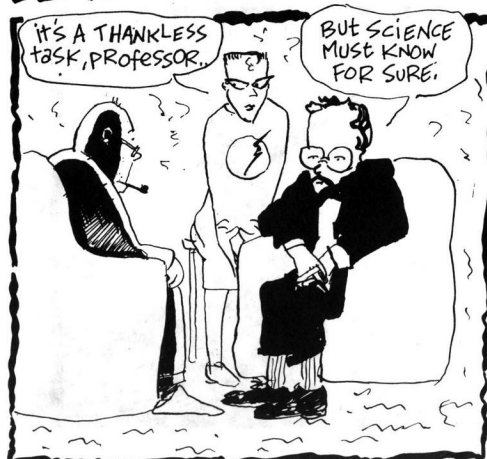


## THE INCREDIBLE UNBELIEVABLE TOURNEY

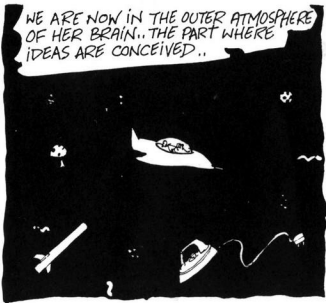
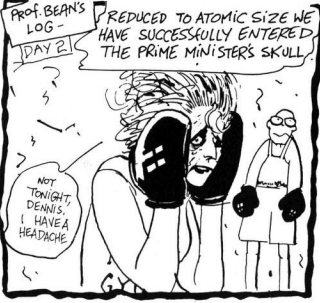


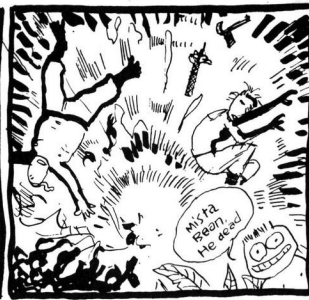
AT THE ENGLISH COUNTRY HOME OF THE FAMOUS PROFESSOR BEAN.

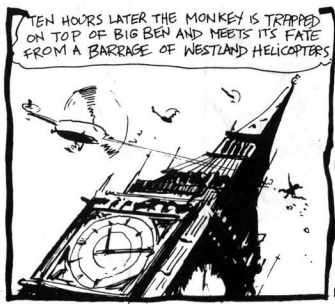
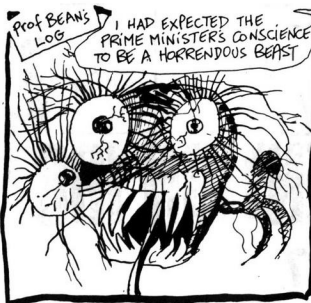
LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT —YOU WANT ME TO LEAD AN EXPEDITION INTO THE PRIME MINISTER'S BRAIN?!













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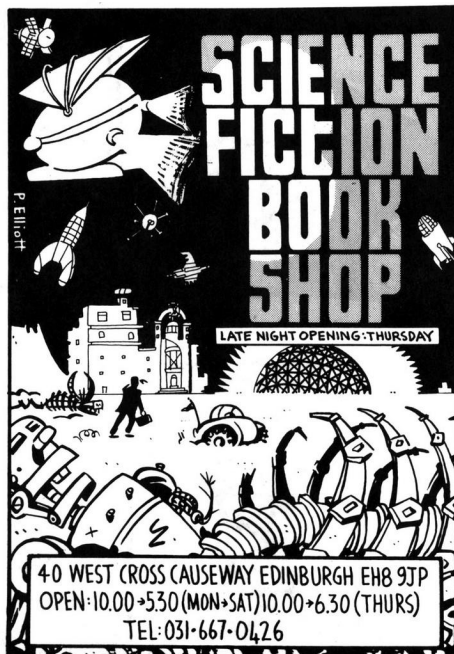
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## MINI-MANIA

IN THIS XEROX ERA, every young hopeful can easily photocopy his/her own D.I.Y. comic. In America, the simplest and cheapest format is a single sheet, copied on both sides and cut in two to make a pocket 8-pager, and this nifty mailing size has spawned a coast-to-coast postal phenomenon—Mini-Comics.

As anyone who can hold a pen can start publishing them, mini-comics often serve as a showcase for pretty mediocre first attempts; but at their best they allow intensely individualistic free expression. Genuine originals like Matt Feazell's *Not Available Comics*, Dale Luciano's *Dada Gumbo Press*, Randy Paske and Bob Pfeiffer's *High School Comics*, Bob X's *Xex Graphix*, Ray Zone's *Zornoid Illustories*, list dozens of titles in their catalogues. And talented newcomers turn up every month, like David Steinlicht's *All Small*, Wayne Honath's *No Way Comic* and Carole Sobocinski's *Zabawny*. More info on these in future issues.

But because of their sheer numbers, low print-runs and poor dis-

tribution, mini-comics have been a samizdat sub-subculture, invisible to the uninitiated. That is until now. Bigshot comic book company Eclipse have sold a ridiculous 12,000 copies of Feazell's mini-comic *Zot #10½*, based on Scott McLeod's snazzy superhero, and have published a small press sampler comic called *Giant-Size Mini-Comics*, distributed via comic shops. Another valuable aid in sorting through this photocopyed plethora is *Small Press Comics Explosion*, a monthly taloid newspaper of small press news and reviews. Send \$2 including post per copy to: Tim Corrigan, 45 Wilcox Street, Rochester, NY 14607.

Apart from a few exceptions—for example, Phil Elliott's *A7 Comics*, Ed Pinsent's *Novello Comics*, Duncan Lee's *Lounge Lizards*, Nathalie D'Arbeloff's *Small Packages*—mini-comics really haven't caught on yet among British self-publishers. But Andrew Rose's *MiniComic* uk line is now selling remixes of the best us minis starting with Feazell and Bob Vojtko along with new local stick-figure funnies. Send an SAE/irc for his free catalogue from: 68 Millward Road, Hastings, East Sussex TN34 3PR.

## FAST FICTION



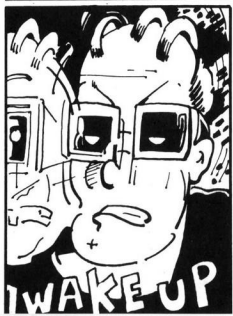
## MELODY A Stripper's Biography

THINKING COMIC ARTISTS have always put something of themselves into their characters; but in the last twenty years or so, more and more artists are taking on the leading role in their strips to tell their own life stories. You could say that Robert Crumb started it all in his confessionals, but today the genre of 'autobiographics' boasts several diverse successes: Harvey Pekar's *American Splendor*, Spiegelman's *Maus*, Lat's *Kampung Boy* (see last issue's review), Keiji Nakazawa's *Barefoot Gen*, Eddie Campbell's *Alec* and much of Will Eisner's modern work.

To these ranks should now be added *Melody*, the stage name of Sylvie Rancourt, a nude dancer in Montreal, and the title of the unique comic series she produces recounting her true experiences there. Back in 1980 money is short, so her lazy boyfriend Nick suggests that she work as a strip-tease dancer, as a temporary measure of course. But this quickly becomes her career, as she ends up supporting Nick and his shady schemes.

Sylvie Rancourt's autobiography is neither titillating nor sordid but astonishingly honest and human; it shows Melody's sense of shame at her first audition, her love for Nick, blind to his faults, her sympathy for her clients, her innocent optimism. Compared to slick European porno comics, her drawing is naïve, even childlike, but it communicates directly and intimately. She is using the most basic comic vocabulary to record, and possibly to cope with, her feelings.

She has published six issues in French with 48 pages and full-colour covers for \$2.50 Canadian each + post. Advertisements in her comics tell readers which clubs to visit to see Melody in the flesh. You can read *Melody* in a pocket-sized English version of the first issue, translated by Jacques Boivin, by sending \$2.00 Canadian plus \$1 post to: Sylvie Rancourt, P O Box 249, Delorimier Station, Montreal, Canada H2H 2N6.



habit of dressing up as a cardboard fruit bat, and the main course on the menu, the first chapter of 'The Subway to Oblivion', an atmospheric mystery about a sinister food processing plant. Help Tom continue his serial by buying this first issue, 28 pages A4, 50p + post from Flat 2, 16 Central Road, West Didsbury, Manchester M20 9ZD.

For the widest range of British Small Press Comics, write to the FAST FICTION Service, run by Ed Pinsent, for bi-monthly mail order lists (free for an SAE/irc from 27 Bracewell Road, London W10 6AF) or visit the stand at London Comic Marts in Central Hall, Westminster (next dates August 1st and October 10th from 12 noon, admission free).



Left to Right: Matt Feazell's *ZOT! 10½*, XNO's *Xex Hex 1*, David Steinlicht's *All Small 3*, R.J. Williams' *Skinboy Disorder*.

## HOT OFF THE PRESS!

**WEEPIES:** Merv Grist writes comics and songs and combines both in his first 'Read N' Roll' comic. His two cynical tear-jerkers become song lyrics, inventively lettered and illustrated with brilliantly detailed picture postcards. 'Ambulance' is an Anglicised send-up of 'Leader of the Pack' and 'Lassie's Last Leap', a four-hanky country and western monologue. 20 pp A5 digest,

50p + post from: 5 Clarks Place, Trowbridge, Wilt.

**APPLETOWN:** Luke Walsh is creating two imaginative interconnected serials, an urban romance about lovelorn singer Mal Content, and a fantasy about a mysterious time-traveller Destiny. I detect a distinct European retro-future influence in Luke's drawing, which uses some striking page layouts. Two A4 magazine issues are out, the first has an excellent colour photocopy cover, the second extra pages by two guest artists. £1.00 each + post from: 40 Marmion Road, Algburgh, Liverpool

**HELPS:** Spencer Woodcock and Denny Derbyshire are an impressive new writer-artist team on three stories with a message. The epic title story sets up a powerful allegory for religious bigotry. In two shorter back-ups they tackle black slavery in a well researched historical piece and criticise the chemical industry in a cunningly illustrated satire. 32 pp A4 magazine, 90p + post from: 14 Ten Bell Court, St. Benedicts, Norwich, Norfolk NR2 1HF.

**THE BIG LIFT:** In this one-man show Tom Tiffin shows great confidence in eight stories. My two favourites are the opener about Albert Mason's eccentric





# T.V. FLY

# T.v

S:K

**SOMEWHERE BETWEEN  
THE T.V. SCREEN AND  
THE SUMMER HEAT,  
I WAS TRANSFORMED  
INTO THE T.V. FLY!**



**MY LIFE IS SPARTAN, A SHOE-BOX APARTMENT  
OR THRU THE VENETIAN SLATS, GAZING OVER  
THE HOT SLUM.**



I HATE THIS FREAK SHOW!

BY TRADITION THE  
FAMOUS FALL TO  
THE ASSASSIN'S GUN ...  
I WAIT MY TURN ... THE T.V. FLY.





# Zombie Mystery Paintings

The Savage Pencil writes ...

ROBERT WILLIAMS – KING OF CHROME, MASTER of cool and creator of cute cartoon crab louse Coochy Cooty—returns to peel back eyeballs and administer a lethal dose of shock treatment to brains which may have withered under a complacent glut of bad 'Art'. If the idea of having your imagination imploding within the frail shell of your skull appeals, then step this way. You won't be just standing in line for pure horror show however, when you enter the Zombie gallery. Mr Williams has strewn his canvasses with gore for sure, but hopefully, if you look hard enough, you'll be learning while you're squirming.

Here is a classic painter at play. A painter obsessed with form and aware of the power of detail and its effect. A painter who draws from every area of art, from Pleistocene to Pop, forever bending and jumbling imagery between the Ugly Head of America and beyond. Everything that has dominated his work thus far, from Roth to Zap, is on show here. T & A jiggle next to chromed brontos while the living-gone pull bone-dry hard-ons, as Russ Meyer-styled goddesses lure them into psychedelic damnation.

These *Zombie Mystery Paintings* show how Robert Williams has evolved as an artist and a humorist, for there are laughs aplenty here too. The text which accompanies the artwork is split into three critical sections with verbatim, liberal and behavioural viewpoints. The same technique applies to the titles of the paintings and the result is both amazing and amusing. For example, the painting at the top of the page opposite is entitled: *The Forensic Hops d'Ouivre*; ACADEMIC TITLE: *Only In The Muzzle Of Treachery Can The Dame Sleuth Find The Smoking Gun*; COMMON TITLE: *Cheeks Of Fortune*. There are no word balloons hovering, but there are complex stories to be told in these canvases, if the reader can be cajoled into unscrambling the teasing meaning from the assembled text and imagery on show.

If all you see is disgusting sex and violence, then sadly you're missing the point. You'll need to stretch your orbs much wider because that's only half the sting in these tales. Gasp in wonder, worry not about the mind behind them and then—eat your goddam art out! O

Blackthorne Publishing Inc. \$11.95/\$9.95 import, available from comics shops. 96 page paperback, 16 in full colour.

ENGLAND's my ancestral homeland and this is my first visit. Since I was a child I've been filled with Arthurian legends. My mother wanted me to be a cowboy, but I wanted to be a knight. Friends tell me this is the land of fuddy-duddies. I can't make a statement like that, I've only been here two days. But you got a real problem here studying art history, because you can only point to maybe three or four really wild artists, like Turner, Beardsley, Blake, Bacon. Otherwise England seems pretty constipated.

I grew up in Albuquerque, New Mexico and in the early Fifties I was a hot rodder. I'd been raised in a family that had always been around race cars. I got my first hot rod at 11 years old, a '34 Ford Sedan. I worked for three years on this roadster, every cent I got went into this car, putting in chrome and parts and I had a beautiful blonde fiancée and we spent a lot of time out in this car.

Then my fiancée left me and I'd failed school, been thrown out of a lot of schools and had a lot of police trouble. I inherited a little money and I thought, "Forget this hot rod and go to Los Angeles and get an art education." Now for the last seventy years art schools have been de-emphasising craftsmanship in drawing, so I had a lot of problems there because the teacher wanted me to paint sloppy and expressionist and think in planes and I always wanted to draw tight modelled shapes. That blew my mind. I ran across my



From an Ed Roth T-shirt advertisement drawn by Robt. Williams, *Drag Cartoons* 34, 1966

wife on campus and we got married and I had the responsibility of taking care of her, so I really had to go to work. I finally got a job as Art Director of *Black Belt* magazine for about six months and then they fired me, cos I was too slow. I got a job as a container designer, but I had to wear a tie, it was a real uptight business and I was a funky dude, so it didn't take long to see through that.

Then I went to the employment agency and they said, "We've got nothing for an artist, but we've got this one job nobody'll take. There's this guy named Ed Roth and everybody we send down there says the place is too filthy and they don't want the job." I showed my stuff to Roth who hired me right there. That was in '65 and I was making twice what I made before, I could dress any way I wanted, come and go totally free. It was like heaven. Actually it saved my life.

I was Ed 'Big Daddy' Roth's Art Director for 5

years. I had to do four lushly illustrated ads a month. Roth doesn't do much drawing himself. What you think of as a Roth drawing was actually done by a guy named Ed Newton. I picked up his chrome technique and learnt to put it on other things than car bodies and car parts. That was in '65 and now you see it everywhere, but it all started with me and 'Newt'. Roth wanted to be a Bohemian and his idol was Van Dutch, a true madman, who brought pin-stripping to hot rods, a master machinist, cartoonist and painter. He thought Roth was a real hack. Roth's best work was in about '65 and '66, but quality was never the deciding factor, because when you're on the crest of a fad, you can shit and it's great! Ed Roth's probably one of the most faithful Americans there is, but somehow he got it into his head that these Hell's Angels were some mistreated group of people! He was always attracted to these Bohemian types, he saw romance in them.

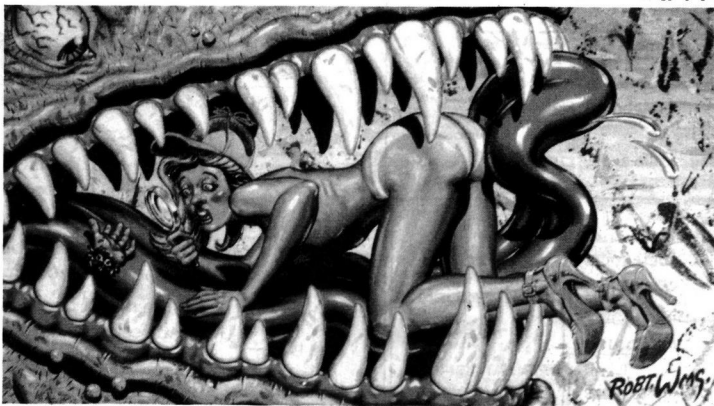
Before Roth's studio, in the late Fifties I'd worked with a travelling carnival in the South West and this was my first exposure to real outlaw underground jerks. They rattled off in carry talk, a kind of pig Latin with zee's in between the syllables. I got familiar with it and when I left the carnival I'd run across people in the streets, degenerates, and they spoke it too. It was a language of decadence and drugs. This was the origin of hippies in the Sixties. As for the underground comics, I'd read the ec comics when I was a kid, but I'd had no dealings with comics for a long time. I remember in '64 me and my wife were in LA and some hippy from San Francisco pulled up in this '51 Chevy full of comic books. This was the first comic collector I'd met. Soon after there was a giant craze over Marvel Comics, like *Dr. Strange*, and comics were back in my life.

The draft board was on me the whole time to draft me into the Vietnam War. The United States before the War was a real repressive place. The police had a licence to mess with you, especially if you were young. In Hollywood they said if you get pulled over, have the cop arrest you right there, because if he pulls you round the corner, he's gonna beat the shit out of you! I tell people today who think they're cool with their mohawks and stuff and they don't know what terror was.

The only bulwark against the police were some underground newspapers, some Leftist inspired, maybe a little Communist, with cartoons and graphics. But as much as I hated the police, I wasn't much of a Socialist or a Communist. I liked tits'n'ass, so as much as I tried, they never put me in. Then psychedelic posters came along, with Moscoso and Griffin, but I was a painter and I'd developed a tremendous animosity to commercial art, I hated to be told what to do.

But when underground comics came out in '67, I was primed for them from the minute they started. I did some stuff for *Yellow Dog* and then Gilbert Shelton rang me up. I'd known him from the hot rod days and I drew for *ZAP!* The underground was a real small community, you could stand them all on one porch and piss all over them! All of a sudden we were little princes, we had art historians following us around picking up our remarks, and we thought this is just the be-

ROBERT WILLIAMS, IN LONDON AT THE END OF A EUROPEAN TOUR, TALKS ABOUT HIS LIFE AS ART DIRECTOR FOR ED 'BIG DADDY' ROTH'S HOT ROD OUTFIT, AS KEY UNDERGROUND COMICS PIONEER IN ZAP! AND COOCHY COOTY, AND NOW AS '80S ART HERO WITH HIS COFFEE-TABLE SHOCKER, *ZOMBIE MYSTERY PAINTINGS*



# PSYCHOPATHIA AESTHETICA

ginning. It got real big, but by about '73 it got too watered down, there were 2,000 people trying to do undergrounds, print bills had shot up and it petered out. Today you've got thousands of young artists trying to do something and they can't do nothing but mini-comics and small press stuff. But the strongest will survive that.

to have them analysed, but they just started justifying them. What I wanted was some provocative butchery, so I got a psychiatrist to sit down with me and help with terms so I could write my own. Each oil painting has three titles and alongside are three paragraphs. The first is a verbatim description of exactly what you're looking at. The second is a wimpy liberal look at the picture that doesn't even deal with the violence and vulgarity of it, just the design and colour-play. And the last is written by a behaviourist that minces no words! They've been in two shows in LA that are travelling around the States, one all mine, the other, *Western Exterminators*, with me, Roth, Panter, Zoell and Georganne Deen. But I'll never give up doing comics; comics have got the element of the fourth dimension, you got time in there, a painting doesn't have that.

'And Roth today, now he got religion. That happened after he lost his business over those Hell's Angels and bikers, his wife left him and his life fell apart, and he got so low he was going to become a truck mechanic. Finally somebody from a right wing kind of Disneyland attraction called Nottsbury Farm picked him up and put him in charge of all their signs and designs. It was perfect for him. And he's selling his T-shirts, decals and stuff. But I hope when I become an old man, I don't start referring to the Bible all the time. Maybe that happens when you get old, but somehow I don't think that's going to happen to me!'

ROBT. WILLIAMS' oil paintings were exhibited recently in New York in a show titled *Messages from a Drunken Broom*. If you think you could live with one, write for details to: 8039 Teesdale Ave., N. Hollywood, CA 91605.

Ed Roth has his catalogue available from: 14245 San Feliciano St., La Mirada, CA 90638 and talks about his Rat Fink model kits in Model Figure Collector 3, \$2.50 plus post from: 15354 Seville Road, Seville, OH 44273. Rat Fink is making a comeback in his own comic written by 'Big Daddy'. \$2 plus post per copy from Starhead Comix, PO Box 3044, Seattle, WA 98103.

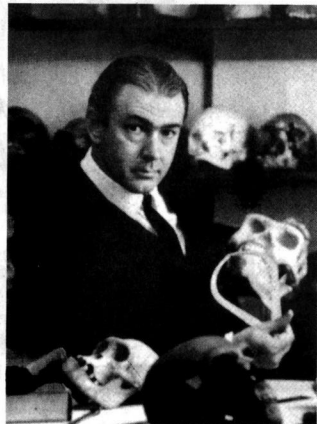


Coochy Coochy in 'A Pissant's Chance' in Rip Off 12 1983

'One disturbing thing about these young artists though is that they've got little concept of the tremendous amount of groundwork that's been laid for them at a lot of people's expense. When we were doing underground comics in the late '60s, our asses were up for grabs. We knew that if the Government had swung any righter than it did, they could round our sort up.

'As for new guys like Gary Panter and Bob Zoell, they're in De Kooning's world, I'm somewhere in the Bosch, Dali and Mickey Mouse worlds. Gary was getting such energy out of his work and I'd always known that when you do tight stuff, your devices for energy and movement are really muffled. Gary helped me loosen up in these new 'over-expressionist' paintings. For my book I took these ZOMBIE MYSTERY PAINTINGS to psychiatrists

'WHAT I WANTED  
WAS SOME  
PROVOCATIVE  
BUTCHERY ...'



# HEROES

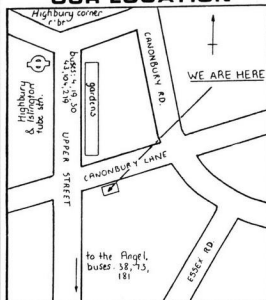
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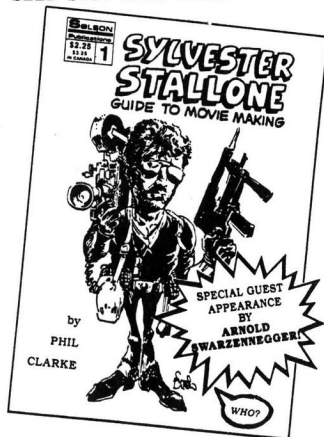
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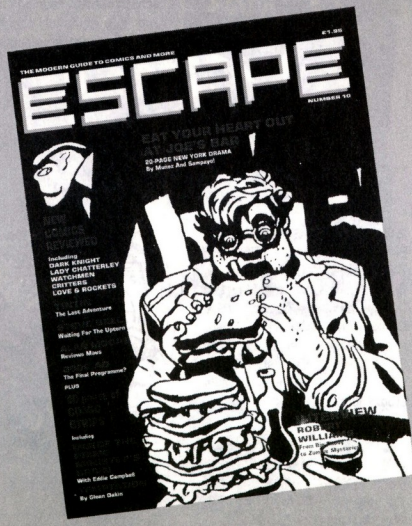


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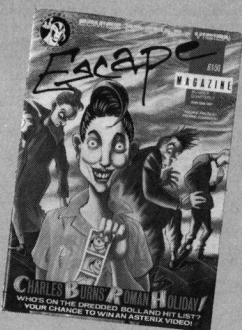
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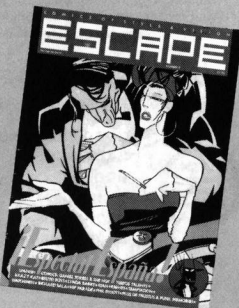
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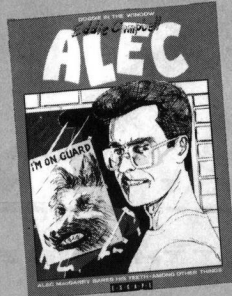
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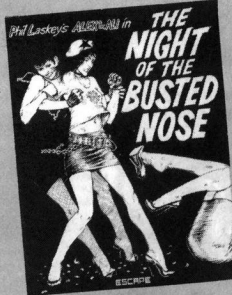
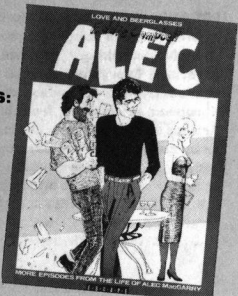


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# IN A DISTANT GALAXY...

...on the left side of the Tharsus cluster, there is a small but well developed blue skied planet. In its major city an experiment hits its target.



A wobbly lab-thing says in a near-perfect american accent...

I have discovered the key to the ultimate power!



But unrestrained ultimate power has many unfortunate qualities.

BAROOM

Blimey!

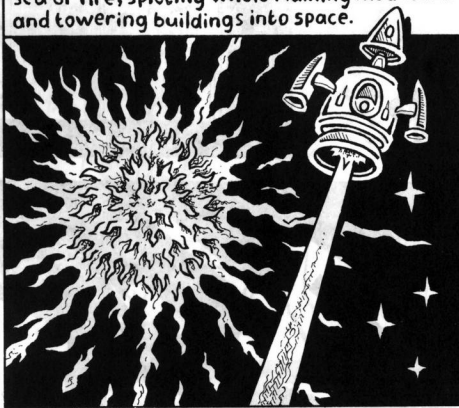


The untamed flames spread like wildfire! Cities, countries, continents and oceans are razed by fire and dry-rot! Aliens get upset!

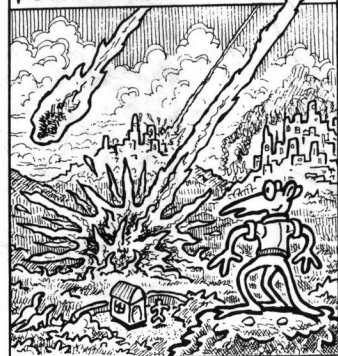


Oh Bluuuurth! There goes the neighbourhood!

Soon the very bedrock turns into a molten sea of fire, spitting whole flaming mountains and towering buildings into space.



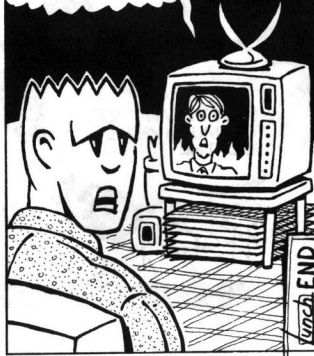
The larger of these travel across space to crash, still aflame, upon the distant plains of near-by planets of distant suns.



Zillions have died in this tragic apocalypse. Whole civilizations wiped out. Billions of species eliminated. Tables overturned. Television series pulled out of schedule. But...



...as yet we don't know if any Britons have been killed. Paul Over, BBC news, the Tharsus cluster.



END

# SATURDAY NIGHT

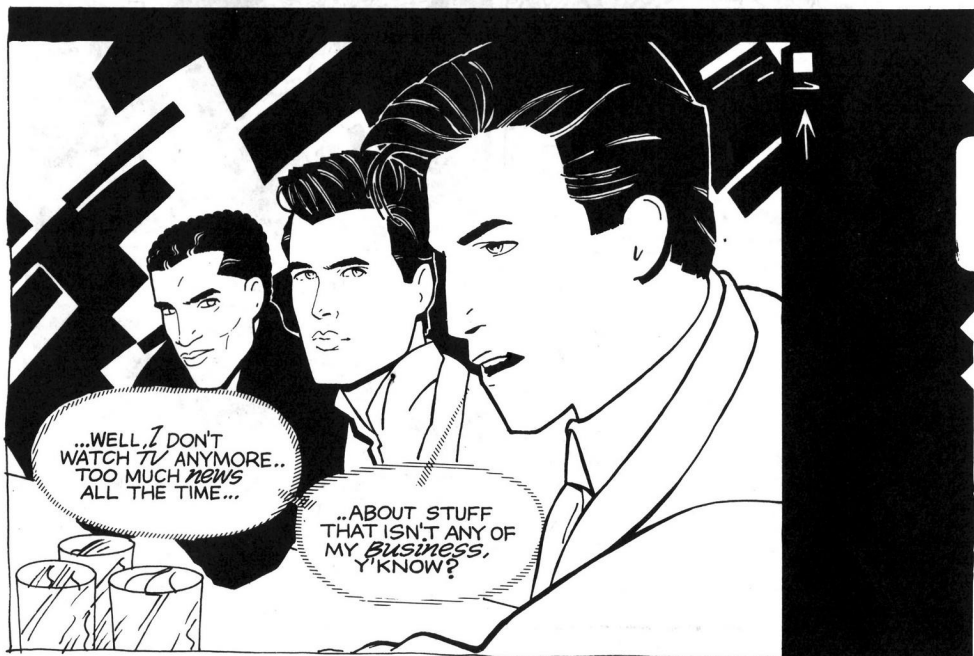
HAVE YOU  
BEEN HERE  
BEFORE?

Naw..

ME NEITHER.

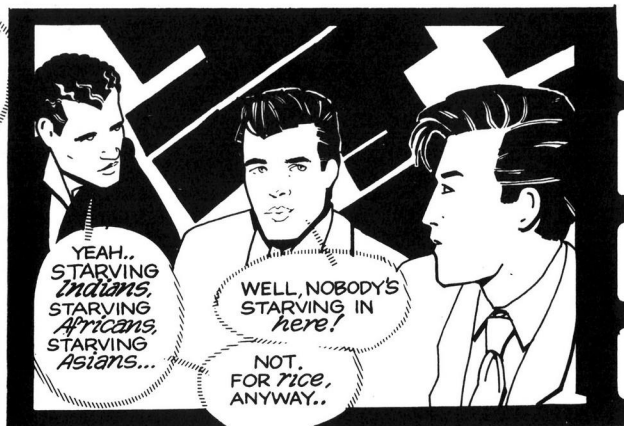


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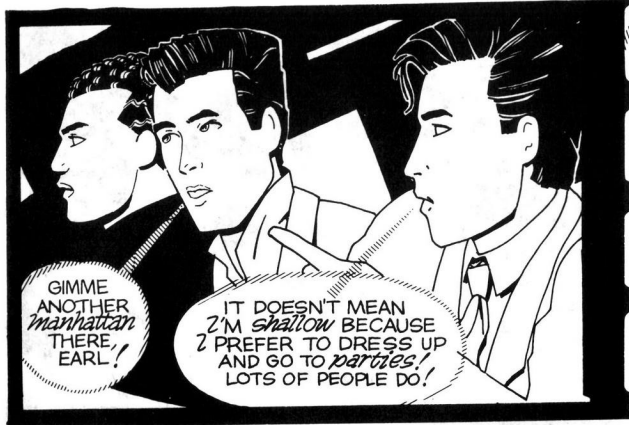


...WELL, I DON'T  
WATCH TV ANYMORE..  
TOO MUCH *NEWS*  
ALL THE TIME...

..ABOUT STUFF  
THAT ISN'T ANY OF  
MY *BUSINESS*,  
Y'KNOW?

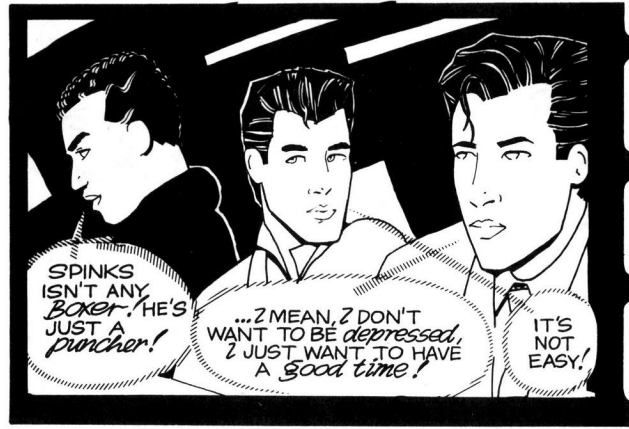






I don't usually come here, but tonight I'm celebrating.

I don't usually come here, either. What are you celebrating?





# Abe inherits the MOON



- or be brave  
when you leave -  
by  
GLENN DAKIN-

There is a death  
in the family  
and Abe goes  
down for  
the funeral

It is the first  
time the family  
have been together  
without it being  
a happy  
occasion



The funeral  
service is full  
of words that  
do not belong to us.  
like Jesus,  
resurrection,



With the prof-  
essional bouquets  
and the smart  
coffin, the  
artificiality of  
the occasion  
seems a cruelty  
on my family -

an  
artificial  
cruelty  
that death  
itself  
would  
never  
deliver

Take  
these  
things  
away.

Abe decides he will  
Never go to another  
funeral again

if only I  
had the  
strength  
not to.

Why do we  
Sleepwalk,  
and tread  
all over  
our  
hearts ?

?

When the will is read  
some wonderful things  
are revealed..



Abe finds that he  
has inherited the  
MOON..

I didn't know  
the Moon belonged  
to my grandad



and the overgrown  
valleys and tracks  
of the disused rail-  
way lines



and there is a  
new welcome in  
the pulse of the  
night -



perhaps because  
the family has been  
started in the  
Beyond ..

The American Government  
Fights Abe's right to the Moon  
in the Supreme Court



But the proof is indisputable -  
Abe's Grandad won the moon  
off the King of the Moon People  
in a card game.



Abe Wins the  
Case

STAR  
MOON  
IN SAFE  
HANDS!



The Coca-Cola people  
try to buy the face of  
the Moon for an advert



Abe gives the  
railway lands  
back to the  
Trolls



On the condition that  
they turn Frank Fairfax  
into stone -

I'm just  
on my way  
down to  
'Romeo'

Here he  
comes now



Abe and his friend Geoff  
go out in the fields -  
Contemplating nature -

Blimey, these  
Cabbages look like  
they've given up the  
ghost



Well it must  
be very  
discouraging  
for them..



Just imagine -  
you're a seed -  
growing away  
in the soil -  
Shooting up,  
Wondering what  
great destiny  
awaits you -



Then, when you  
get to the top you  
find out you're a  
Cabbage -



And not even a solo  
'one-off' cabbage, but  
one of a million dreary  
cabbages!



Do you feel as if  
you've come out of  
the soil yet?

No, not  
yet.



I hope I never  
do - Oh come on  
Geoff -



Be brave  
When you leave  
And leave  
When you're due



Be glad  
for the gift  
That's been  
given to you -



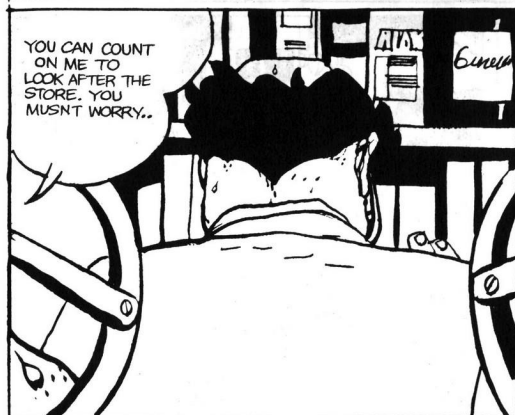
Don't be an ungrateful  
burdensome guest  
Who having been asked  
to eat of the best  
Lingers and prattles  
and blocks up the door  
And hangs around  
tiresomely  
Waiting for more -

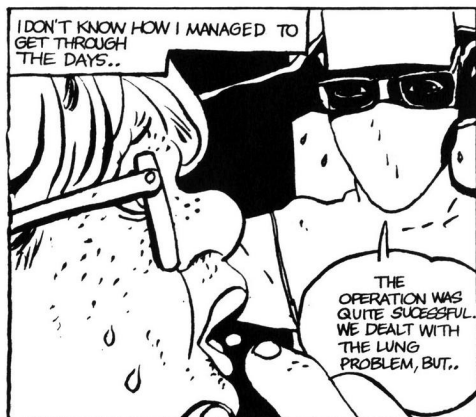
While the Host suffers  
and onlookers grieve -  
So walk out that door  
and be brave  
When you  
leave



















I'D LOST ALL RESEMBLANCE  
TO MISTER WEISS' BOY.  
I SHUT THE STORE,  
AND STARTED BUMMING AROUND.  
I DIDN'T WANT TO SEE  
HER. THE DAYS PASSED  
BY. I COULDN'T STOP  
THINKING.

HEY..THIS IS  
THE END OF  
THE LINE.



HEY, LOOK...  
LET'S GO!



GIVE US  
EVERYTHING  
YOU'VE GOT!



NOTHING, THE  
PIG! LETS  
SHOW HIM!



HE'S ALL  
YOURS,  
JUAN!







FATHER  
KILLER, YOU  
SON OF A  
BITCH!!

DAMN  
MURDERER!!



SNIFF



THAT'S WHAT  
HAPPENED..  
I KILLED HIM  
BECAUSE---  
HEY, WHERE'D  
YOU GO?

I'M OVER  
ON MY  
BUNK, NOW  
SHUT YOUR  
TRAP, PIG!



DEAR ROSA:  
IT WAS A MIRACLE  
I SURVIVED. I'VE  
LOST A LOT OF  
WEIGHT, THE  
DOCTORS SAY I'LL  
PULL THROUGH.  
TOO BAD I'LL  
ALWAYS BE BLIND.  
THE LAWYER SAYS..



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# Temptation

by  
GLENN  
DAKIN



temptation



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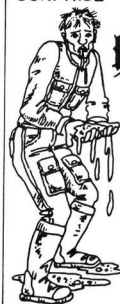
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'If' in The Guardian

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Methuen

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George Herriman

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'Calculus Cat', Knockabout

## 8 (4) ALEC

Eddie Campbell, Escape

## 9 (16) WILL EISNER

'The Spirit', Kitchen Sink

## 10 (3) GLENN DAKIN

'Temptation' and 'Capt.  
Oblivion', Escape

## 11 (-) ROBERT CRUMB

Zap! to Weirdo, Last Gasp

## 12 (11) CHARLES BURNS

'Dog Boy' and 'Big Baby', Raw



Moebius, (new entry at 13), draws Batman for the frontpiece to the French edition of Frank Miller's *Dark Knight* (up to 4) from Aedena Editions.

## 13 (-) MOEBIUS

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## 14 (21) RAY LOWRY

His strips and cartoons in NME

## 15 (17) VIZ COMIC

Newcastle's Chris &  
Simon Donald

## 16 (10) CHUCK JONES

Bugs, Daffy & Roadrunner

## 17 (22) JUDGE DREDD

2000AD, especially by Bolland

## 18 (-) ELEKTRA ASSASSIN

Miller & Sienkiewicz, Epic

## 19 (5) GILBERT SHELTON

'The Freak Brothers',  
Knockabout

## 20 (14) DOONESBURY

Garry Trudeau's strip in  
The Guardian

## 21 (26) LEO BAXENDALE

'Bash Street' to 'Willy the Kid'

## 22 (-) PHIL ELLIOTT

'Doc Chaos', Escape  
and 'Second City', Harrier

## 23 (-) RAYMOND BRIGGS

'When the Wind Blows'  
& others

## 24 (25) HOWARD CHAYKIN

'American Flagg' & 'Time  
Squared', First  
and 'The Shadow', dc

## 25 (29) JACQUES TARDI

Top French BD artist,  
Casterman

## 26 (-) POSY SIMMONDS

Her Monday strip in  
The Guardian

## 27 (15) RIAN HUGHES

For his strips in Escape

## 28 (-) DANIEL TORRES

'Triton', Catalan and 'Opium',  
Knockabout

## 29 (-) SAVAGE PENCIL

'Mr Inferno', 'Nyak! Nyak!',  
Corsemeat

## 30 (-) JOHN BAGNALL

Strips in Calico County,  
Trashcan, Atlantic Garage  
and Escape



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Bubbling just outside the thirty are: Asterix, Lynda Barry, Batman, Frank Bellamy, Bilal, Chester Brown, Serge Clerc, D.R. & Quinch, The Far Side, Bob Lynch, Mark Marek, Don Martin, Maus, Nexus, Kevin O'Neill, Gary Panter, Ed Pinsent, Pogo, Popeye, Ranxerox, Raw, Ken Reid

## PRIZE WINNERS

So many nominations, such good taste, such appalling handwriting. We have been swamped. Readers everywhere are voting for their latest Fave-Rave comics. We tossed them all into a cement mixer and retrieved the five lucky winners who receive Steve Bell's *The Unrepeatable If...* Per Andersson, Lindome, Sweden; Matthew Griffiths, Wallasey; Glen Humphrey, Cabin John, Maryland; G. Jones, London; Tim Scott, Hedden Bridge.

## BEST IN ISSUE

What were the most popular strips in ESCAPE 10? We've tallied your votes and come up with your top five

1. **Skiff** Glenn Dakin & Phil Elliott
2. **'Sav Sadness** Bob Lynch
3. **'Punk Memories'** John Bagnall
4. **'The Inheritors'** Rian Hughes
5. **'The Crow'** Eddie Campbell

## HOW TO ENTER

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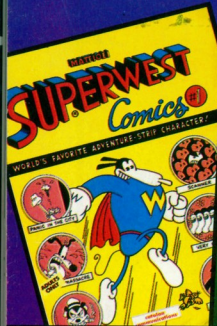
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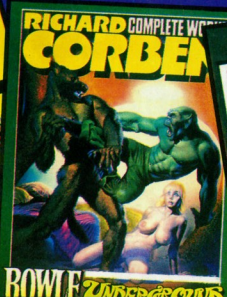


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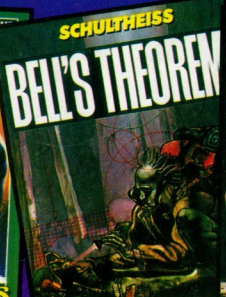


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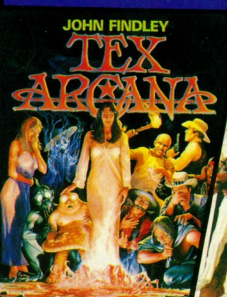
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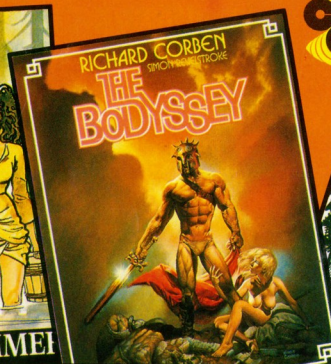
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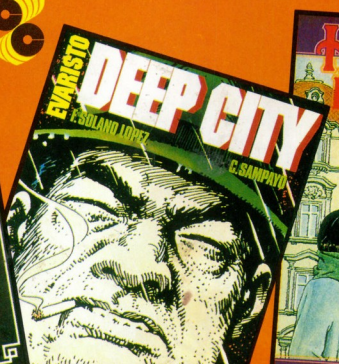
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